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PREHISTORIC POTTERY

SHIRE ARCHAEOLOGY

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The Dorchester-on-Thames beaker (Ashmolean Museum, Oxford)

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Preface

The study of prehistoric pottery is of basic importance to archaeologists but there are few places where the amateur or beginner can find an account of its development and styles. In this introduction I have tried to describe the main sequence without oversimplifying and to indicate the problems of its classification and interpretation that are unresolved. I have read the excavation reports and pottery analyses of many experts to whom I am grateful for ideas, and I am particularly indebted to the works of Professor Stuart Piggott, Professor Frank Hodson and Professor Barry Cunliffe, which have helped me to clarify my opinions. I would like to thank Mr Stephen Minnet of Somerset County Museum for his advice about the text, and my father, G. L. Proctor, and my husband, P. A. Langmaid, who have both made invaluable contributions by their frank and useful criticisms of what I have written.

Thanks are also due to the curators of the following museums for permission to publish photographs of pots in their collections: the Rougemont House Museum, Exeter, fig. 1; the National Museum of Scotland, Edinburgh, figs. 8a and b, 10a, b and c, 16b; Cornwall County Museum, Truro, fig. 13a; the Yorkshire Museum, York, fig. 8c; the National Museum of Wales, Cardiff, figs. 13b, 16a; and the Dorset County Museum, Dorchester, figs. 22 and 24.

Lastly I would like to thank my husband, Philip, and my daughters, Julia and Jessica, for waiting patiently on many occasions for meals made late by 'Mummy's pots'.

Note on names of pottery types and groups

Throughout this survey I have used the standard and most common names for pottery types and their associated cultures, and some of them may seem strange to students new to this field. The origins of the names are historical and varied, but it would be confusing to change them because they are so widely established in the literature. Some names, such as beakers and food vessels, were given to pots by early antiquarians who tried to classify the pots according to their supposed uses. Others, like Windmill Hill or Glastonbury, have been given the names of important sites at which large amounts of the pottery were found. Sometimes the names are purely descriptive; collared urns and duck-stamped ware are

good examples. Belgic pottery is named after the tribe which supposedly introduced it from Gaul.

Confusion arises in books and articles where the authors have attempted to reclassify some groups or have tried to give a more appropriate or less biased name to a particular group. Unfortunately there is little that the student can do about such circumstances, except to read the text carefully and to study the illustrations, and to decide for himself by comparison which group is under discussion. The day when all prehistorians will agree to a standard nomenclature lies far in the future.

Introduction

Anyone who has taken part in an excavation will know that the majority of the finds are broken pieces of pottery, many of them small and unexciting to look at. He will also know that the *potsherds*, as the fragments are called, are carefully collected and their positions on the site recorded in detail; they are washed and marked with record numbers before being examined by the director and finally stored away in museums for future research. Very few of the sherds will be reconstructed or displayed in museum cases, and one may well wonder why they are thought to be so important.

To the archaeologist potsherds are indicators of the age of the site and the way of life of the people he is studying; they may tell him something of trading contacts and movements of peoples, about their art and even their religion. He learns these things from the shapes of the pots and their decoration, from the range of types found in a particular site or layer, the clays from which the pots are made and the methods used to shape and fire them.

Pottery is so useful because, although few complete pots survive, the fragments deposited on sites are nearly indestructible in most soil conditions, and, because pots are often broken, there is normally plenty of pottery on any site from the neolithic period onwards. Pottery was only one of the materials used by prehistoric peoples for making containers, but the others — wood, leather, basketwork — have disappeared, except in very rare instances where these organic materials have been preserved either by waterlogged conditions, for instance in the lake villages of Somerset, or by drought, as in some semi-desert sites in Egypt. So, although the pottery shows only part of the material equipment of any culture, it is usually the best, and sometimes the only indicator of the date, cultural affinities, etc, of the site.

Prehistoric pottery in Britain differs from that of the Roman and later periods because it was usually *hand-made* by the community or family that needed it, so its styles and distribution reflect the traditions of the people who used it. At the very end of the prehistoric period *wheel-made* pottery of fairly standard types was introduced into south-east England, and with it the specialised potter who worked from some kind of factory and distributed his wares over a wide area. This system was normal in Roman Britain, and Romano-British pottery can therefore be studied in a

far more systematic and accurate manner than prehistoric.

The interpretation of prehistoric pottery cannot be learnt from a textbook, although the general outlines can be studied in this way. The subject is learned in depth by studying published drawings and photographs from many excavation reports and, even more important, by personal examination of pots and potsherds in museum collections. Only this personal and intimate acquaintance with actual examples can give the archaeologist the 'feel' of each type of pottery and enable him to identify what he finds on his own excavation. This is true also of later pottery, as any antique-dealer will confirm, but it is more important for prehistoric pots because these have no other confirmatory information as a guide.

Fortunately the styles of pottery in prehistoric societies were stable over long periods of time and wide areas, so the basic types of pottery belonging to each phase or major cultural group can be recognised. 'Gimmicks' were very rare among prehistoric communities, and even these can usually be identified by the type of clay they are made of or by their decoration. Some cultures have been named after the pots that are typical of them, particularly the *beaker* and *food vessel* cultures; others are named after important sites at which large and useful collections have been found and published, notably the *Windmill Hill* and *Aylesford-Swarling* cultures.

Traditions were not often abandoned or changed abruptly; new arrivals in Britain usually brought their own styles with them from the Continent, but very often the preceding tradition was mixed with the new one to produce hybrid British styles. Sometimes new ideas seem to have been adopted as a result of trade contacts, rather than immigration, and throughout British prehistory there is an almost unbroken continuity — a steady development of pottery types, sometimes the slow evolution of native traditions, and sometimes periods of rapid change caused by a new stimulus from outside; but always the native traditions can be seen to survive in some form into the next phase.

Technology

All pottery is made of clay, which is found in very widespread places in one form or another. However, natural clays vary in suitability for pot-making, and during prehistoric times people found out how to improve their local material or where they could find a reliable source of clay. There is some evidence that people travelled considerable distances to acquire good clay, or that potters traded wares that had been made where a good source of clay had been discovered. A good example of this is the Lizard Head pottery of the later iron age, which was traded all over south-

west England. In spite of this trade, it seems likely that most prehistoric pottery was made of local clay close to the homes of the people who were going to use it.

Most clays are not suitable for making pots to be fired in primitive kilns, so substances were added to reduce shrinking and cracking during the drying and firing processes. The most common 'fillers' were quartz sand and crushed flint, but many organic substances were also used, including crushed shells, crushed sherds from old pots and chopped straw. Sometimes other objects were included accidentally and these can be of great interest to archaeologists; the impressions of grains of corn in neolithic pottery have been very useful in working out the history of agriculture.

Once the clay has been dug from the ground it has to be prepared for use. Some clays need weathering, being left exposed to wind, rain and sun for a time. Then the clay must be 'wedged'; the potter will thump it about, kneading and squeezing it to drive out air and to mix it evenly and thoroughly. Fillers will be mixed in at this stage to produce a workable clay which will not collapse during firing.

Most prehistoric pottery was made by coil- or ring-building. In this process the potter makes sausage-shaped rolls of clay and builds them up to form the walls of the pot. The coils are usually smoothed down over each other as the pot is made and in well-made pots the joins are invisible. Coil-built pots usually have a flat base as this is easiest to work from, and they are often made on a simple turntable, such as a flat stone or a mat, which can be turned slowly as the work proceeds. (This is sometimes called a 'slow wheel', but the term is confusing.)

The simplest way of making the round-based pots of the neolithic period was by moulding; an existing pot or basket was pushed into a pile of very sandy clay, so that it left an impression; then the clay of which the new pot was to be made was rolled out like pastry and pressed into the mould; the rim was tidied up by hand and the new pot could then be left to dry before firing.

At the end of the prehistoric period wheel-made pottery was introduced by the Belgic tribes and other groups who had been in contact with the Romans. The wheel is used to rotate the clay fast enough and long enough to allow the potter to use the centrifugal force of the spinning clay to shape the pot, and it is likely that kick wheels and lathe-operated wheels were in use at an early date. Wheel-made pottery can often be recognised by the fine horizontal grooves or rilling caused by coarse particles in the clay and the uneven pressure of the potter's hands; sometimes the bases have characteristic *cheese-wire* markings where the pots have been cut from the wheelhead. The shapes of wheel-made pots are also influenced

by the use of the wheel, as a great variety of curves and grooves and bulges can be easily achieved. However, in the iron age, some hand-made pottery is technically very sophisticated and it can be difficult to tell wheel-made pots from their hand-made imitations.

As soon as the pot was completed, some surface treatment was usually carried out. The surface might be smoothed, using a *rib* of wood or bone, or it might be thinned, using a *beater* on the outside and an *anvil*, such as a smooth stone, on the inside of the pot. Sometimes the beater had a patterned surface, so that the pot was decorated with impressed patterns during the thinning process. Some prehistoric pottery was deliberately roughened at this stage of manufacture — it is called *rusticated* pottery. The surface of such pottery is usually covered with fingertip pinching or rough impressions, perhaps to disguise poor-quality clay or perhaps to make the pot easier to pick up.

Lugs and *handles* were usually added while the clay was still wet. Sometimes the handles were pushed right through the wall of the pot; in other cases a knob of clay was squeezed up on the pot surface and then perforated to make a stringhole lug. Lugs and handles are rare on British prehistoric pottery, and lips for pouring liquids are virtually unknown.

Better-quality pots were often *burnished*; the pot was allowed to dry and was then rubbed smooth and shiny, using a water-worn pebble or a smooth-surfaced bone. Burnish on neolithic pots is uneven and gives a very characteristic *ripple burnish*, which may have been produced deliberately. Beaker pottery was often burnished before incised or impressed decoration was made on the surface, and Belgic pottery often has patterns made by lines of burnish contrasting with the otherwise matt surface of the pot.

Most prehistoric pottery in Britain, if decorated at all, is decorated with impressed or incised patterns. *Impressed* decoration can be made with almost any object: bird-bones, shells, string, flints wrapped with string and fingernails were among the most popular tools used. Patterns were numerous, but, until the arrival of compasses in the iron age, they are usually geometric—zigzags and triangles, squares and diamonds, with hatching used to vary the surface of the decorated area. *Incised* decoration, in which patterns were cut into the wet or drying clay, was very common and was often combined with impressed motifs. Some incised pottery is classified as *excised*, meaning that the potter actually cut out part of the surface with a chisel-like tool, but it is very difficult to be certain about examples. *Grooving* is the name given to very shallow incised decoration, where the engraving tool has marked, but not cut into, the surface of the pot.

Applied decoration was also used; in this knobs and strips of clay were

stuck on to the surface of the pot and sometimes further marked by slashing or impressing.

Before it can be fired pottery must be dried thoroughly, to prevent it from cracking in the kiln. In prehistoric conditions this might have been done in the open air in good weather, but in winter it must have been done indoors, perhaps beside the domestic hearth or in a simple oven. It is usually assumed that firing must be done in a kiln, but it is possible that much prehistoric pottery was fired either in a domestic hearth or in a bonfire. A group of dried pots could be piled up and covered with bonfire material and the whole heap set alight. The fire would heat rapidly and cool slowly with fairly satisfactory results.

Towards the end of the prehistoric period simple kilns came into use, giving the potter more control over the firing conditions. Usually the fire was set in a pit below a perforated floor on which the pots were stacked. A clay dome with a vent at the top was built over the pots and the fire was then lit. When firing was complete the dome was broken away and the pots could be recovered.

Excavators usually examine pottery thoroughly to find out how it was made and fired but it is difficult to be certain about the exact methods that have been used in many cases and detailed work in the laboratory is often necessary. Microscopic examination of thin sections can help with this and is being used increasingly to identify the clays and fillers of which the pots were made. The results of such examinations show that some groups of pottery were made at particular locations and traded over considerable distances, or that people using a particular site came from a wide area, bringing their own pottery with them. It will soon be necessary to reappraise the standard interpretation that most prehistoric pottery was made by the family or community who used it, and pottery may eventually be used as an indicator of trading relationships between contemporary groups.

2

Early and middle neolithic (c 4000 to 2200 BC)

The *neolithic* period or new stone age was at one time defined by the appearance of pottery and polished flint axes on archaeological sites. However, it is now defined by the introduction of farming, and in Britain this happened some time shortly after 4000 BC.

In 1952 Stuart Piggott described the two main types of neolithic pottery in Britain, calling them the primary and secondary neolithic, and, although his theory is no longer fully accepted, his pottery classifications are still valid. The *primary neolithic* groups are characterised by open bowls of plain types; they are round-based (so that they will not stand on a flat surface) and have thickened or rolled rims; the normal form of decoration, if any, is slashing or similar markings round the rim or shoulder (figs. 1, 2 and 3). The simplest bowls may be the earliest and are called *bag-shaped pots* (fig. 2a); they may be copies of leather containers, with the decoration round the rim representing the stitching that held in place a withy to strengthen and hold open the top of the leather bag. Some pots are carinated (fig. 2d, 3a), that is they have a sharply marked angular shoulder near the top, also decorated with slashes, representing a second withy. Slightly later, the shapes become more refined and the decoration more elaborate, with vertical and oblique strokes below the rim, both inside and outside the pot, and lines of impressed dots, dashes, etc. This type is known as *Windmill Hill* pottery (fig. 3), named after the famous site of Windmill Hill near Avebury in Wiltshire. The latest examples of the primary series in southern England are called *Abingdon* ware; the shapes are much the same, though often in finer pottery, but the decoration is more elaborate.

Outside the south and east of England, the home of the Windmill Hill culture, there were many groups producing similar pottery, for instance in East Anglia and in Yorkshire. There were comparable groups in the highland zone (fig. 5) and in Ireland, where they are usually found in association with megalithic tombs of all kinds.

Piggott thought the primary series represented the original immigration of neolithic farmers from north and west France, bringing with them a variety of cultural ideas, the megalith builders of west Britain coming from the Atlantic coasts of France and Spain, and the builders of causewayed camps from further east. He thought the ideas of these primary farmers were adopted by native mesolithic groups, who produced

their own pot-forms — the *secondary neolithic* in Britain.

The principal group of the secondary neolithic is called the *Peterborough* culture (fig. 4), which is found over much the same areas as the primary series, and often in the same or similar sites. The pottery developed over a long period; the earliest forms are called *Ebbsfleet* bowls (fig. 4a) and are similar in shape to Windmill Hill bowls, but they are made of much thicker and coarser pottery. They have heavy rims and are decorated all over with impressed patterns made with a variety of objects — fingertips, bird-bones, sticks and twisted cords. A very characteristic form of decoration is the *maggot*, made by impressing the clay with a piece of cord twisted so tightly that it is bent into a curve. The decoration is usually arranged in horizontal bands. These bowls developed into the true *Peterborough* bowls (fig. 4b), still round-based with heavily clubbed and everted rims, hollow necks and carinations, and with the decoration even more thickly applied. The final phase of the development is known as *Fengate* pottery (fig. 4c and d); the rims on Fengate bowls are greatly enlarged to become collars, and some of the pots have small flat bases. The decoration does not always extend to the base, and there are more geometric patterns in the arrangement. Many of the features of these pots were carried on into the early bronze age.

Outside the main Peterborough areas are other groups with decorated pottery: some with round bases, as in the Ronaldsway culture of the Isle of Man; others using flat-bottomed pots with incised geometric decoration, as in the Rinyo-Clacton culture, whose main sites are in the Hebrides, with a scatter down the east coast.

Piggott's theory seemed very neat and satisfactory, but it was made before the use of carbon-14 dating had made any real impact on British archaeology and is now untenable, because some Peterborough sites are now known to be as early as, or even earlier than, the earliest Windmill Hill sites. In 1961 Clarke thought there was a single *bowl* culture, starting with the simple bag-shaped pots of south-west England, for instance at Haldon and Hembury in Devon, and developing through the classical Windmill Hill phase to the highly decorated pottery of the Peterborough group. He suggested that variations in detail from one area to another might be caused by small-scale immigration from many parts of north-west Europe, but he was still unable to account for the very early dates of some decorated pots which should be late in his sequence.

Carbon-14 dating has shown that there are very early examples of both primary and secondary types, the earliest group being the *Grimston-Lyles Hill* style, found in the north of England and in Ireland, with dates as early as 3600 BC. The pots in this group are well made — thin, fine pottery, carefully shaped and fired. The shapes are open bowls with thin,

rolled-out rims and sharp carinations, but they have very little decoration. Technically they are greatly superior to the crude bag-shaped pots which are usually thought to be the earliest. It seems therefore that, until more stratified deposits and carbon-14 dates become available, the neolithic must be seen as a period in which several related pottery traditions were introduced from various parts of north and west Europe and developed inside the British Isles. The plain bowls of the primary tradition did not last as long as the Peterborough decorated style, which gave way to new forms about 2200 BC.

Late neolithic and early bronze age (2300 to 1400 BC)

The division between the end of the neolithic and the beginning of the full *bronze age* in Britain is very difficult to define; some archaeologists prefer to call this the chalcolithic or 'copper/stone' age, but, although none of the terms is really satisfactory, I have used the conventional names, because they are at least familiar. The developments of cultures and pottery styles in this period are extremely complicated and not yet fully understood. Some of the pottery types are closely associated with well-documented groups of grave-goods, whose chronological sequences are well-known. The problems arise when one attempts to unravel the cultural associations of the pottery groups, because many of them are found mixed together or with interchangeable grave-goods. The situation must have been changing rapidly under the influence of new groups of immigrants; the most important arrivals were the *beaker people*, who introduced metal-working and single burials under round barrows.

There are four main families of pottery: the collared urns, developing from native Fengate ware; beakers of several types, introduced from continental Europe; food vessels of dubious ancestry but with elements from both native and intrusive sources; and grooved ware, also of unknown origin but probably native.

Collared urns (fig. 6) were at one time thought to be later than all the other types and it is certain that they lasted longer and gave rise to the urn forms of the middle bronze age in most of Britain. Later examples incorporate features adopted from beakers and food vessels, but the type as a whole is now seen to be descended from Fengate pottery. The unstable narrow flat bases of Fengate pots (fig. 4c) were gradually widened, and the collar and neck developed.

In the past, elaborate typological schemes tried to show that the urn forms developed in strict sequence, but it is now clear that collared urns in bewildering variety were being made throughout the early bronze age. The diagnostic feature is the heavy collar or overhanging rim, which in tripartite urns is separated from the body by a concave neck (fig. 6b and d); the rim often has an internal bevel and is decorated on this and the collar, neck and upper part of the body; the methods of decoration include Peterborough features, such as maggots, impressions made with bird-bones, fingertip pinching, and simple incision and grooving, as well as beaker techniques, such as comb-stamps and twisted-cord impressions.

The designs are geometric and it is thought that the more complex the design the earlier the pot. Technically the pots vary from thin, carefully made, well-fired urns to very amateur and poor-quality pots made of coarse, lumpy clay with inclusions of sand, small pieces of flint and organic materials such as crushed shell or chopped straw. The poor firing of many examples has led to the suggestion that they were intended specifically for the burials with which they were deposited, not for domestic use, and even that they may have been fired on the funeral pyre when the body was cremated. The rare examples from domestic sites are less decorated and better fired and would have been more serviceable for food storage.

Most of the urns have come from round barrows; some are found with inhumations and presumably held food or drink offerings for the dead; the majority were used as cinerary urns to hold the burnt bones. They were often buried upside down, and the presence of a bone or bronze pin suggests that they had lids or covers of skin or some other organic material. Some are found in well-furnished graves with daggers, beads of various kinds and smaller pots known as incense cups, but many are found without datable grave-goods and this is why they are so difficult to date with any accuracy. Collared urns are found all over Britain with regional variations, and they gave rise to the urn forms of the middle bronze age.

The *beaker cultures* have been very thoroughly investigated but there is still no complete agreement on their development and significance. Beakers (figs. 7 and 8) were used all over Europe north of the Alps from about 2300 to 1700 BC. They are associated with the spread of copper technology and are found mixed with many pottery types, particularly in central Europe. They are usually found in burials under round barrows with a restricted range of grave-goods. It seems that for some time the beaker people formed a separate but dominant group who preserved their identity while living among a wide variety of other tribes (rather like British colonial administrators during the reign of Queen Victoria). Their success is thought to be due to their knowledge of metal-working, and their spread was probably caused by their search for sources of copper, tin and gold, all metals that are found in restricted areas, such as Brittany, Cornwall and parts of Ireland. They may also have introduced the first fermented drinks — their beakers would make ideal beer-mugs!

Beaker people are known almost entirely from their burials. These are always under round barrows or cairns; the body is buried on its side with the knees drawn up to the chin; it is accompanied by a beaker and the warrior's weapons, either a dagger and knife, or a stone battle-axe and archery equipment. Burials of the beaker cultures are almost identical

from Bohemia to Scotland, but there are regional variations in the shapes and decoration of the pottery. In Britain there are several distinct groups, representing at least two immigrations, followed by a long period of local development and contact with native ideas, until the beaker people were absorbed into the middle bronze-age population.

A few British beakers seem to belong to the earliest phase of the beaker migrations; these are known as *Atlantic beakers*. They have smooth S-shaped profiles and simple decoration of narrow bands of oblique hatching, alternating with plain bands. The pots are usually reddish-brown and the surfaces were burnished before being decorated by incising or impressing them with a *comb-stamp* or some kind of toothed instrument. The most common associated grave-goods are simple daggers, and these Atlantic beakers are distributed along the south coast.

The second group, the *bell beakers* (fig. 7a and b), are also found mainly in the south of England. The shape and decoration are similar to the Atlantic beakers; the outline is still smooth but more open like a bell, and they often have a row of hatched triangles immediately above the base, a characteristic which is closely paralleled in the Rhineland, from which this immigration undoubtedly originated. These beakers are associated with archery equipment (flint barbed-and-tanged arrowheads and stone wristguards). Although most bell beakers are found in typical beaker barrows, some have been found in henge monuments and the final stages of chambered tombs, showing that the beaker people were contemporary with well-established native groups and apparently were on friendly terms with them.

Another group of beaker people entered Scotland and the north of England from the Netherlands, bringing *short-necked beakers* (fig. 8a and b) and using stone battle-axes as well as metal daggers. The short-necked beakers have fat rounded bodies and short widely splayed necks. The decoration is arranged in horizontal bands and includes more complex geometric patterns than those found on bell beakers. They are usually found in burials under very small barrows or cairns, and often the burials are in cists (rectangular boxes made of stone slabs but much shorter than a coffin).

Long-necked beakers (fig. 7c and d) are thought to be a British development from short-necked beakers. They are tall and narrow, the neck taking more than half the height of the beaker. The decoration is more elaborate than on other beaker types, the horizontal bands becoming narrower and finally being replaced by all-over decoration including panels, diamonds, lozenges and triangles, and carried out in a wide variety of techniques. Simpler types of beakers, barrel-shaped and sometimes roughened all over (or rusticated), were also made and are

found on domestic sites, mixed with pottery belonging to other traditions, especially food vessels. The users of long-necked beakers seem to have lost contact with the metal-producers and they reverted to stone for axes and battle-axes and flint for daggers, knives and so on. Sometimes long-necked beaker burials contain jet buttons and other trinkets, which are usually associated with food vessels; the two groups should be considered together, perhaps as parallel developments from similar sources.

The *food vessel cultures* are divided into four groups, none of which is properly understood. All of them owe something to the beaker cultures, which were partly contemporary, but they seem to be mainly derived from native neolithic traditions. The best-known group are the *Yorkshire food vessels* (fig. 8c), found over much of east and north England. The typical shape of a Yorkshire food vessel is biconical with a sharply flaring short neck and a pronounced bevel inside the rim; it nearly always has a groove round the widest point, with stops or small lugs inserted in it; the lugs are sometimes perforated. The pots are decorated all over with geometric patterns in roughly horizontal panels, with motifs and techniques from both Peterborough and beaker sources. They are found with burials under long barrows and under round barrows using the beaker burial rite of cremation, as well as in cists and cairns. They are associated with conical buttons, beads, necklaces and other small objects made of jet and with stone battle-axes and flint or metal daggers. Yorkshire food vessels also occur in simple settlements or campsites, which probably belonged to itinerant pastoralists or to traders.

In Scotland, the *northern food vessels* (fig. 9a and b) are similar, but usually do not have stops in the grooves around the widest point; they seem to be directly related to short-necked beakers and occur in cist-burials with the same types of grave-goods — archery equipment, daggers, battle-axes, etc. They are distributed along trade routes, where hoards of early bronze axes have been found.

In Ireland the early metal industries are associated with pottery known as *Irish bowls and jars*; in spite of the curious bulbous shapes of these pots, their decoration shows that they are closely related to English and Scottish food vessels, and they are classified as part of the same culture, though some experts think they represent the long-necked beaker cultures of England. There are few true beakers in Ireland, which is surprising because Ireland was a major source of metals in the early bronze age. The Irish bowls (open shapes) and jars (closed shapes) are wide and bulbous in appearance and are heavily decorated.

It is impossible to treat the *southern food vessels* (fig. 9g, h and i) as a separate cultural group, as they are found with collared urns and with beakers. Southern food vessels are more upright in shape than the

Yorkshire type and many have strongly marked ridges instead of grooves. The decoration is similar to that on other food vessels, and the bevel inside the rim was given a lot of attention. This group contributed many features to the urns of the middle bronze age, and simplified forms continued to be made for a very long time.

Food vessels are not associated with any particular type of site; they have been found in chambered tombs, in barrows with inhumations and with cremations, in temporary campsites and in henge monuments; sometimes they occur alone, but often they are mixed with collared urns and beakers, and it is possible that they had a special purpose in the culture rather than representing a distinct group of people.

Another southern group of pottery that seems to have had a special function or significance is *grooved ware* (fig. 11). This used to be classed with the Rinyo pottery found in neolithic settlements in the Hebrides, but it is now thought that the two are not connected in spite of the close similarity of form and decoration. Grooved ware has usually been found in henge monuments (it was first recognised at Woodhenge, Wiltshire) and only rarely occurs in other types of site, and then always mixed with beakers, urns or food vessels. The pots are straight-sided, rather like wide flower-pots in shape, and are decorated with grooves, knobs and applied strips of clay arranged in geometric patterns.

The beginning of the true *bronze age* is marked in certain favoured areas by the appearance of rich cultures deriving their wealth from trading contacts with other parts of Europe. The most important groups were those in Wessex and Cornwall, but there were others in Derbyshire, Scotland and south-east Ireland. The *Wessex culture* has been more thoroughly studied; it is known almost exclusively from its burials, which may be inhumations or cremations under complex round barrows in which the burial mounds are surrounded by henge-like ditches. Many of the barrows are grouped in cemeteries, but isolated examples are also known. The grave-goods include bronze daggers, pins, etc, gold ornaments and imported luxuries such as amber and faience beads. The pots found with the burials are usually collared urns of early (i.e. highly decorated) types, but some have food vessels and various small pots, known as *incense cups* (fig. 12). These tiny cups have no obvious ancestry in Britain or on the Continent, but the decoration includes motifs and techniques found on British neolithic bowls, beakers or food vessels. They are made in a wide variety of shapes and are carefully finished and elaborately decorated; nearly all of them are perforated, so perhaps they were used for pouring libations or burning herbs. (There is no evidence for the use of incense at this date!) Almost every example has been found in a burial, so they were probably used in the burial rite. Small bowls and

cups continued to be deposited with burials in the middle bronze age, sometimes being put inside the principal urn with the cremated bones; the later ones are usually much simpler and undecorated.

In *Cornwall* there was a similar rich culture at about the same date, probably deriving its wealth from the tin deposits there. The pottery is distinctive — large heavy decorated urns (fig. 13a), rather like collared urns in shape, with strap-like handles between rim and shoulder. They are very similar to Breton pottery of the same period.

Although the late neolithic/early bronze age was a period of great activity and variety, and although a great deal of pottery classification has been done, it is not possible to determine cultural relationships with any confidence because of the absence of well-stratified settlement sites, and this situation is likely to continue because such sites almost certainly do not exist.

Middle and late bronze age (1400 to 600 BC)

The difficulties about classifying and interpreting the pottery of the middle and late bronze age are more pronounced than for the earlier and later phases of the prehistoric period. The reasons for this are that the pots themselves are usually simple and plain and they come from cremation burials without grave-goods or from rare settlement sites. It was assumed at one time that all bronze-age settlements belonged to the late bronze age (that is after 1000 BC), but now that carbon-14 dates are available it is known that some of them belong to the middle bronze age, around 1300 BC. This has left a hiatus in the late bronze age in some areas. Research and analysis of the pottery of this period is uneven, both geographically and typologically, and the published reports are often at variance, so that the relationships between the pot-types, and sometimes even their classification, are not agreed in any detail. However, it is possible to describe the main types.

The principal culture of southern Britain is known as the *Deverel-Rimbury culture* (fig. 14). It is named after two cemetery sites in Dorset, where the characteristic pottery was found, and has been recognised at many other burial sites and settlements. The burials are always cremations, either in urns or just buried; they may occur in barrows, usually as secondary burials, or in flat cemeteries containing up to one hundred apparently unmarked graves. Grave-goods are very rare; occasionally a metal razor is found in a male cremation, or one or two beads, but nothing that can be closely dated. The impression given by the burials is that they represent a very poor society, but this is not true since hoards of good-quality metalwork also occur at this date. The 'poor' graves simply reflect a society that did not believe in grave-goods (a Christian cemetery would give a similar impression). The settlements consist of groups of circular huts set in yards among 'Celtic' fields and are very widespread, now surviving only in unploughed areas, such as Dartmoor and on the chalk downs. The Deverel-Rimbury culture survived in most areas until the end of the bronze age and in remote areas may have continued until the coming of the Romans; many of its features survived into the iron age.

There are three main classes of pottery in the Deverel-Rimbury culture: barrel urns, bucket urns and globular urns. *Barrel and bucket urns* (fig. 14a, b, d and f) are shaped as their names suggest: very simple pots made

of coarse, thick, gritty and often badly fired clay, and sparsely decorated with fingertip impressions on rim and body or with applied cordons on the rim and along lines representing the neck and shoulder of the collared urns from which they were derived. Some supposedly early examples have cordons applied to form horseshoe patterns or crosses, but these are rare. The *globular urns* (fig. 14c and e) are quite different from the barrel and bucket urns with which they are found. They are made of thinner, finer, better-fired clay, are often dark grey or black instead of buff or brown and are very carefully finished and decorated. The shape, a spherical body with an upright neck, is a new one in the British sequence and has no obvious parallels on the Continent. Some of the decorative motifs, especially hatched triangles and running multiple chevrons, can be found on earlier styles, but the technique of decoration is new; the surface of the pot was carefully burnished and patterns very lightly grooved on to the pot, in some cases so lightly that it can only be seen in a side light. The decoration is confined to the neck and upper part of the body and is geometric in design. Many globular urns have several small lugs or knobs on the shoulder, but these are hardly functional. It is believed that the later globular urns are those with less defined shapes and less decoration, but this has not yet been proved.

The origins of the Deverel-Rimbury pottery are obscure; the barrel and bucket urns are clearly derived from native traditions, but it is not known where the globular pots came from, nor how they became incorporated into the culture, nor why they are so much better made than the other types.

In the south-west peninsula, the *Trevisker culture* is similar to Deverel-Rimbury in many respects, but it has distinctive pottery (fig. 15). At the type-site, Trevisker Round in Cornwall, three phases of pottery were identified: the earliest phase has curved biconvex pots with small strap-handles on the widest point and impressed cord ornament in geometric patterns; in the second phase the pots have straighter outlines, lugs or finger-dimples (fig. 15b and c) instead of handles, and decoration made by incising or by impressing with cords; in the final phase the pots are almost straight-sided, like flowerpots, all the decoration is incised and there are no handles. It is not yet clear whether this typological development is true for all sites; at Norton Fitzwarren in Somerset a plain 'late' pot was found stratified below an 'early' pot with a handle and incised decoration. But the Trevisker group is distinct and easily recognised; it is found mainly in Devon and Cornwall with a scatter in Dorset and Somerset and a few outliers in South Wales. The shapes of the pots have been variously derived from Cornish handled urns, food vessels and beakers, but, while it is likely that all these groups contributed

something to the pottery style, the precise origins of the culture remain a mystery.

The development of middle bronze-age pottery in the highland zone was different. Collared urns and food vessels continued to be made, and they became bigger and more elaborate. They are called *enlarged food vessels* (fig. 13b) and are just that—the same shapes as earlier southern food vessels and with the same kinds of decoration. *Encrusted urns* (fig. 16a and b) developed from collared urns; they are also large and decorated all over with applied cordons, strips, knobs and lumps, as well as being impressed with cords, incised with sharp sticks, slashed with knives and pinched by fingertips — the effect is very vigorous and cheerful! Most of them are found with burials in barrows, flat graves, cairns and cists, and they are difficult to date because of the lack of grave-goods.

Many areas of the country seem to have a pottery blank in the late bronze age, either because sites have not yet been found or because it was a period in which other materials were used instead of pottery. However in Sussex there are Deverel-Rimbury settlements which must belong to the end of the bronze age because they continue in use into the iron age, which can only be recognised by the appearance of iron age pottery in the rubbish pits. It seems likely that a similar sequence must have occurred elsewhere, and no doubt sites will eventually be found.

It was thought until fairly recently that hillforts belonged entirely to the iron age, the earliest examples being associated with Hallstatt pottery styles brought in by iron-age immigrants. But excavations over the last fifteen years or so have shown that several hillfort sites were occupied in the late bronze age, and in some cases the earliest defences belong to this phase. The pottery from these hillforts is sometimes of Deverel-Rimbury types but in other cases belongs to an ill-defined group known as *flat-topped* ware. Flat-topped ware is usually dark in colour, with smoothed but undecorated surfaces; the walls of the pots are nearly straight, curving in slightly at the top with the rim cut off neatly; the bases are flat and slightly splayed. Hallstatt bronze objects from the same levels in the hillforts show that contact with Hallstatt people had already been established, and this may explain why pottery of the flat-topped group is so rare.

Pre-Roman iron age (700 BC to AD 43)

Various schemes have been proposed to explain the pottery and other evidence of the *iron age* in Britain, relating the British material to the continental sequence. Studies of the period have been complicated and prejudiced by the historical facts known from Roman sources. It is known from Caesar that several invasions had taken place before the Romans arrived; because at least one of these invasions was recognisable in the archaeological material, it has tended to be assumed that all new styles of pottery, metalwork, etc, reflect invasions from the Continent. Recently there has been a move away from interpreting the iron age as a series of invasions, and the native population has been given more credit for new ideas. Unfortunately there is still no agreement about exactly how the material should be classified and interpreted and the pottery is still the subject of considerable controversy.

At the beginning of this century iron-age pottery was classified under the names of the great continental cultures — Urnfield, Hallstatt, La Tene and Belgic — and this basis for classification will be found in the works of Professor Gordon Childe and Sir Cyril Fox. In 1931 Professor Christopher Hawkes renamed the British material, calling the earliest pottery of Hallstatt type 'iron age A'; the second or La Tene group he called 'iron age B'; and the latest or Belgic group 'iron age C'. His scheme was attractive, partly for its apparent simplicity, and it was quickly adopted and applied wholesale, with subdivisions being made to allow for detailed studies of particular groups and new material. Unfortunately some people thought of A, B and C as chronological phases, which Professor Hawkes had apparently not intended, and soon there were groups, defined solely by pottery, with ill-defined titles like South-Western Third B or Northern Second A, which added to the confusion.

Professor Hawkes's scheme was not seriously challenged until 1961 when Frank Hodson insisted that people should clear their minds of invasions and continental parallels and take a fresh look at the British material. He showed that the basic peasant culture of iron-age Britain was a direct continuation of the bronze-age Deverel-Rimbury culture, with some new features such as hillforts and pottery styles. He allowed that certain well-defined groups, particularly the Arras culture in Yorkshire and the Aylesford-Swarling culture in Kent and Essex, did reflect invasions or large-scale migration into Britain, but otherwise changes were

the result of trade and social contacts.

Hodson's ideas met considerable opposition, but he has influenced all later attempts to classify the iron-age material. Professor Barry Cunliffe has recently analysed style-zones of pottery for those areas where the pottery is sufficiently distinctive to permit this, but he emphasised the basic unity of other aspects of the British iron age, such as metalwork, house-types, etc, and stressed that interpretation of the meaning of the style-zones cannot be undertaken until more research has been done. David Peacock's petrographical examination of some groups of pottery, the duck-stamped ware of the West Midlands and the Glastonbury pottery of south-west England, has shown that both types were the work of professional potters working in identifiable districts and trading their pots over wide areas. This upsets previous ideas that all pots were home-made and reflected the cultural traditions of the people who used them and makes it more difficult to accept pottery styles as indicators of valid cultural groups.

It is therefore difficult to decide which scheme to follow and whose terms to use, but I have chosen to follow Hodson's scheme for this introduction to the iron-age pottery, because it is the easiest to understand and it is sufficiently flexible to allow new material and more detail to be included quite easily.

Hodson suggested that iron-age Britain had a single basic farming culture, essentially a continuation of the Deverel-Rimbury culture, into which three major waves of influence from Europe were assimilated. The basic culture is characterised by hillforts and farmstead settlements with circular huts and grain-storage pits, usually associated with Celtic field systems, and using pottery of devolved Deverel-Rimbury types. Around 600 BC new pottery types begin to appear in British sites, and they are related to the *Hallstatt* pottery then being used all over north-west Europe. It is likely that there was some immigration into Britain by Hallstatt people, but it must have been on a small scale as few other features of the Hallstatt culture can be traced in Britain. Hodson called this early phase *Little Woodbury I* after a settlement site in Wiltshire.

The main pottery types of Little Woodbury I are *situlate jars* (fig. 17) and *angular bowls* (fig. 18). The situlate jars are said to be derived from the beaten bronze buckets or situlae used in the Austrian area of the Hallstatt culture from about 750 BC. The jars vary in shape (fig. 17), although they are all inspired by the same model. They are usually quite large and have a distinct neck and shoulder; sometimes the profile is angular with a sharply inturned shoulder and an upright or widely flaring rim; in other jars the profile is much gentler with a smooth curve from rim to shoulder. There are regional styles: for instance, in Wessex situlate jars

usually have high shoulders and nearly upright necks with fingertip markings on rim and shoulder; in the Thames valley, they are wide-shouldered with sharp carinations and angular necks and wide flaring rims. However, there is variety in all areas; at one time it was thought that jars with gentler S-shaped profiles were later than the angular ones, but this has not been generally proved by stratigraphical association.

The fine pottery of Little Woodbury I consists of a series of small bowls (fig. 18), usually carefully made and decorated. Bronze prototypes for these are well-known on the Continent and one example has been found at Welby in Leicestershire. Some of the bowls are small and were probably used as drinking cups, but many are quite large and would have been suitable for food preparation. There is a wide variety of shapes; the best-known kinds have angular bodies with well-marked necks and shoulders, the angles sometimes being emphasised by small cordons (fig. 18h). Geometric patterns are incised or grooved into the surface, or burnished on to a matt background. Other types have more rounded bodies with inturned or out-turned rims and narrow bases. The bases of all kinds of bowl may be flat, but omphalos bases (raised in the middle) (fig. 18f and g) and foot-rings (fig. 18j) are quite common. Again there are regional preferences: in Yorkshire many of the bowls are rounded with almost upright necks, and in Wessex they are very angular and are often dipped in a haematite slip to make them a coppery red when burnished.

At some sites pottery in this style continued to be used for a very long period, and situlate-jar derivatives continued to be made throughout the iron age.

Little Woodbury II is the name given to the second major pottery phase; all other aspects of the culture continue undisturbed. Hawkes thought that the appearance of the new pottery style, which is related to *La Tene* pottery on the Continent, was caused by an invasion from the Marne valley in France, which was reflected also in a spate of hillfort building at this date. Hodson rejects this invasion, except for the Arras culture in east Yorkshire which has definite links with the *La Tene* culture of the Marne valley, but which has produced no distinctive pottery. It seems that trading contacts could have produced the changes in pottery styles with small-scale immigration, for instance in Cornwall.

The best-known group of pottery of Little Woodbury II type is known as *Glastonbury ware* (fig. 19); the pots are dark in colour, often nearly black, and have carefully smoothed surfaces. The majority of the pots are necked bowls and jars with fat rounded bodies, upright necks and curled-out rims. The bowls are shallow and open; the jars are tall with narrow necks and some have a groove inside the rim to hold a lid. Other shapes include tub-shaped mugs, apparently copied from wooden prototypes (a

wooden example was found at Glastonbury) and large ovoid storage jars. The pots are decorated round the shoulder and the widest part of the body with bands of grooved lines enclosing geometric and curvilinear designs. Peacock's petrographical analysis of a large selection of this pottery has shown that there were workshops for its production in the area of the Lizard Head in Cornwall, on the Mendips in Somerset and near Exeter in Devon, and that pots were traded over long distances. The best pots come from Meare and Glastonbury and are beautifully made and decorated with complex curvilinear designs which seem to be copied from the La Tene patterns on metalwork of this period. It is likely that the Glastonbury style was introduced by traders and immigrants from Brittany, who set up pottery production in Cornwall and later introduced it into Devon and Somerset.

In Wessex, comparable *dark burnished pottery* (fig. 20a, b and c) was introduced at about the same date, probably also through trade contacts with north-west France, and most settlements and hillforts in Dorset and neighbouring areas produce pottery similar to that found in the middle phases at Maiden Castle, Dorset. The pots are usually globular or barrel-shaped and are not as fine as pots in the Glastonbury group. They have short necks, slightly inturned or outcurved, with bead-rims. Decoration is unusual, but it includes simple geometric designs and dimples and some curvilinear patterns, such as eyebrow motifs and simple scrolls. Some storage jars have heavy countersunk lug-handles (fig. 21d) on their shoulders. Tub-shaped pots and flattish dishes are also known.

Pottery of similar types is found in most of south and east England (figs. 20 and 21) with groups in the Thames valley and the east Midlands (where Hunsbury is an important site), and in Sussex there was a distinct and vigorous pottery production. A well-known style from the west Midlands is called *duck-stamped ware* (fig. 21c). It is found in the area between the Cotswolds and the upper Severn valley in mid Wales, and Peacock has shown by petrographical analysis that all of it was made in the vicinity of the Malvern Hills. The pots are similar in shape to those from Wessex, but are usually decorated with a pair of grooved lines enclosing a band of S- or V-shaped stamps (the 'ducks') just below the beadrims.

In some areas there is almost no evidence for pottery belonging to the Little Woodbury II group, and it seems likely that the situlate-jar tradition of Little Woodbury I continued undisturbed, for instance in East Anglia. In parts of the Midlands and the highland zone excavations produce no pottery at all, and it is thought these areas may have been aceramic (without pottery) for considerable periods. However, in north-west Scotland, where brochs and wheelhouses were being built, there was a

strong pottery tradition, perhaps derived from local neolithic styles or perhaps introduced by immigrants from south-west England. The pottery from the Highlands and islands of Scotland is similar to the situlate-jar tradition of Wessex, although much of the pottery is very coarse.

In most of Britain the Little Woodbury tradition continues right up to the arrival of the Romans, with pottery of one of the two styles described above, but in the south-east and south-west new immigrants arriving during the first century BC brought in new ideas which influenced most pottery styles in the south.

It is known from Caesar that there was an invasion of Britain by Belgic tribes from north-east Gaul shortly before his own campaigns in 55 and 54 BC. This has led to the assumption that all the pottery in southern Britain that belongs to the latest phase must be 'Belgic', but this theory is now in doubt.

In the counties around the lower Thames estuary the Belgic occupation seems fairly clear. Gold coins are quite common, and hillforts were abandoned in favour of *oppida* (large areas of habitation enclosed by long dykes) such as the well-excavated example at Colchester. Cemeteries, a rarity during the earlier part of the iron age, reappear with rich graves furnished with metalwork as well as pottery. This is called the *Aylesford-Swarling culture* after two large cemetery sites. The pottery (fig. 23) is wheel-made and is inspired by the Roman wares that were being traded north after the establishment of the Roman province in southern Gaul. Production of wheel-made pottery was rapidly set up on a commercial basis, and the pottery was traded with neighbouring tribes, who copied it. Some of the copies are so similar that it is difficult to tell 'Belgic' from 'Belgicised' pottery. Further away from Kent and Essex the influence of the new styles was weaker, but it can be traced in hand-made pottery from hillforts and homesteads which is native in shape but has Belgic features such as cordon decoration and pedestal bases.

The main pot-types of the Aylesford-Swarling culture (fig. 23) are pedestal urns and their variations, cordoned bowls and butt beakers. The pedestal urns are tall with bodies shaped like inverted pears, with widespread rims and high, hollow, splayed bases; they are usually decorated with horizontal cordons, ripples, grooves or bands of burnish. The shape and the decoration are influenced by the action of the wheel and some of the best pedestal urns are very beautiful vessels. There are also corrugated urns with rippled tapering bodies and omphalos bases, and bulging biconical cooking jars with rough-combed surfaces. The bowls have curling S-shaped profiles with grooves and ripples, particularly on the shoulder; many have out-turned rims, but some are narrow-mouthed and have lids that fit neatly into a groove. Butt beakers are

narrow jars with bulging bodies decorated with bands of vertical lines enclosed by horizontal grooves or cordons. Other types include shallow pie-dishes or plates and tazza (angular drinking cups with waisted bodies, low carinations and high pedestal feet). The pots are usually grey to black in colour and are well-made and thoroughly fired.

Trade and immigration from north-west France was also taking place into south-west England during the first century BC and pottery styles rather like the Belgic ones were introduced. Major trading posts were established at sites such as Hengistbury Head near Christchurch and at Mount's Bay in Cornwall, and the pottery from these was traded inland and copied by the local people. The pottery is dark in colour with burnished surfaces and is decorated with cordons. Jars and bowls are the commonest shapes. In Dorset the influence of this imported style gave rise to a group of pottery named after the Durotriges, the tribe known to have lived there at the time; the *Durotrigian* style (fig. 25) is perhaps best represented at Maiden Castle in the war cemetery dated to around AD 46. The style includes burnished bead-rim bowls standing on ring-feet and decorated with dots and vertical ribs, tall cooking pots with upright necks and lattice decoration, jars with countersunk handles, and straight-sided mugs.

A similar style is found in Cornwall, influenced by the trading station at Mount's Bay and immigrants from Brittany fleeing from Caesar's conquest of Armorica in 53 BC. The typical shape there is a bulging narrow-mouthed jar decorated with cordons. Further north influence from one or other group of Belgicised potters affected native styles to varying degrees, and in many parts of England we find Belgicised versions of Little Woodbury II which carried over into the Roman period and eventually gave rise to some of the typically 'Romano-British' types of pottery.

Museums

The following museums have collections of prehistoric pottery of great interest and importance; however, many other museums contain collections of some interest and would be worth visiting.

Avebury: Alexander Keiller Museum.

Belfast: Ulster Museum (National Museum of Northern Ireland), Botanic Gardens.

Birmingham: City Museum and Art Gallery, Congreve Street.

Brighton: Museum and Art Gallery, Church Street.

Cambridge: University Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, Downing Street.

Cardiff: National Museum of Wales.

Colchester: Colchester and Essex Museum, The Castle.

Devizes: Devizes Museum (Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History Society), 41 Long Street.

Dorchester: Dorset County Museum, High Street West.

Dublin: National Museum of Ireland, Kildare Street.

Edinburgh: National Museum of Antiquities of Scotland, Queen Street.

Exeter: Rougemont House Museum, Castle Street.

Glasgow: Art Gallery and Museum, Kelvingrove.

Glastonbury: Glastonbury Lake Village Museum, The Tribunal, High Street.

Hull: Transport and Archaeology Museum (Mortimer Archaeological Collection), 36 High Street.

Lewes: Barbican House Museum, High Street.

London: British Museum, Great Russell Street, WC1; Museum of London, London Wall, EC2.

Norwich: Norwich Castle Museum.

Oxford: Ashmolean Museum of Art and Archaeology, Beaumont Street.

Taunton: Somerset County Museum, Taunton Castle.

Truro: Cornwall County Museum and Art Gallery, River Street.

York: Yorkshire Museum, Museum Gardens.

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Glossary

Pottery types described in the text are not included in the glossary.

Barrow: A mound of earth, circular or elongated in plan, covering a burial or burials.

Bead-rim: A pot rim which has been rolled over tightly to form a beading round the lip of the pot. Common in the later iron age.

Bevel on rim: Angular facet on the internal side of a pot-rim; often decorated, especially in the early bronze age.

Bronze age: The period when bronze was the main metal used for the manufacture of tools and weapons. About 2100 to 700 BC in Britain.

Burnish: To rub the surface of a pot before firing, to give a smooth, almost polished effect.

Cairn: A mound composed of stones, rather than soil, usually covering a burial.

Carbon-14 dating: A method of dating ancient organic materials by measuring the residual radioactive carbon isotopes in a sample and then calculating its age. The method came into use in Britain shortly after 1950.

Carination: A sharp break in the curve of a pot's profile, resulting in a projecting angle.

Causewayed camp: An enclosure composed of one or more roughly concentric rings of quarry ditches, whose excavated material was piled up to form internal banks. The ditches were broken by frequent causeways of undug rock. These camps belong to the neolithic period, e.g. Windmill Hill, Wiltshire.

Chambered tombs: A stone-built tomb, often used for successive burials over a long period: usually covered by a barrow or cairn. Most British examples are neolithic in date. See also *Megalith*.

Cist: A burial pit, sometimes lined with stones and covered with a cap-stone; often buried under a barrow or cairn.

Comb-stamp: A pattern impressed on to the surface of a pot before firing, using a toothed object like a blunt comb. Often found on beakers.

Cordons: A strip of clay applied to the surface of a pot before firing, usually as a simple horizontal hoop, but sometimes as a wavy line. The cordon is sometimes decorated with fingertip impressions.

Cord ornament: Decoration made by impressing twisted cords into the surface of a pot before firing; quite complex geometric designs were

made by this technique, which is typical of late neolithic and early bronze-age pottery styles.

Countersunk handle: A large handle applied to the shoulder of a storage jar, the surface of the pot being depressed to make a larger hand-grip; typical of the later iron age in southern Britain.

Culture: A recognisable group of material (pottery, tools, house-types and other monuments), recurring in a restricted area and thought to reflect the way of life of a particular group of people. Problems of definition are making the word less popular with archaeologists than it used to be.

Faience: A form of glass made from a fusion of sand and clay, often coloured with copper salts. In Britain normally used for beads of early bronze-age date.

Grooved decoration: Pottery decoration in which comparatively broad lines are drawn on the firm but unfired pot surface. No clay is removed, as it is in excised decoration, nor is the surface itself broken, as it is in incised decoration.

Hallstatt: The first iron-using culture recognised in central and western Europe, named after a site near Salzburg in Austria; it influenced the earliest phase of the British iron age, from about 750 BC onwards.

Hand-made pottery: Pottery made without the use of the potter's wheel; in Britain the usual method was coil-building, in which rolls of clay are wound round on top of one another, before being smoothed down. Most prehistoric pottery in Britain is hand-made.

Henge monument: A circular or oval embanked enclosure with an internal ditch, probably used for religious purposes. Most were built in the late neolithic and continued in use into the bronze age; well-known examples are Avebury and Stonehenge in Wiltshire.

Highland zone: The upland areas of north and west Britain, which in prehistoric times usually show a marked difference in cultures from the south-east.

Incised decoration: Pottery decoration in which the soft surface of the clay is cut with a sharp instrument.

Iron age: The period when iron was the main metal used for the manufacture of tools and weapons. In England it lasted from about 750 BC until the arrival of the Romans in AD 43 and lingered after that, especially in remote areas, for a very long time.

La Tene: The second iron-age culture of central and western Europe, starting in the fifth century BC; named after a site on Lake Neuchatel in Switzerland. Its influence first reached Britain about 400 BC.

Lowland zone: The area of Britain roughly south and east of a line from Exeter to Scarborough, which is generally lower than the highland zone to the north and west. In prehistoric times the cultures of the two

zones were often markedly different.

Lugs: Small knob-like handles, sometimes perforated.

Megalith: Literally 'great stone' in Greek. Applied to structures made of large stones, particularly chambered tombs and stone circles, most of which are neolithic or early bronze-age.

Mesolithic: The middle stone age, c. 10,000 to 4000 BC, during which man lived by hunting and fishing after the end of the ice age. Very small flint tools are characteristic of the period.

Neolithic: Literally the 'new stone age', formerly defined by the use of polished stone tools and pottery, but now defined as the period when man became a farmer but still used stone for making tools and weapons. In Britain the neolithic lasts from about 4000 to 2000 BC.

Omphalos base: A pot base which is raised in the centre.

Pedestal base: A pot base to which has been added a pedestal to give a hollow base, sometimes quite high, for instance in the pottery of the Aylesford-Swarling culture.

Petrographical analysis: The examination of archaeological materials to identify their geological source. The method has been used for many years for tracing the stone-axe trade of the neolithic and has recently been applied to pottery. It has been possible to show that certain pots were made of clays from particular areas and traded over long distances; one type of pottery that has been analysed in this way is the Glastonbury pottery of the early iron age.

Ring-foot: A pot base which has a strip of clay added round the edge, so that the rest of the base is slightly raised.

Rustication: A pottery decoration in which the whole surface of the pot is roughened by pinching with the fingertips, stabbing with a stick or some similar technique.

Situlae, situlate: Situlae are bucket-like vessels made of sheet bronze and were used in the iron-age Hallstatt culture. Copies in pottery, which are characteristic of the earlier iron age in Britain, are called situlate jars.

Urnfield culture: An important bronze-age culture of central and western Europe, which preceded the Hallstatt culture. It is known largely from its cemeteries, which are flat and contain many cremations in urns. It may have influenced the Deverel-Rimbury culture of Britain in the late bronze age.

Wheel-made pottery: Pottery made on the potter's wheel, where the centrifugal force of the rotating wheel is used to raise the walls of the pot. In Britain the potter's wheel was not introduced until the first century BC, and even then was not widely used for a long time.

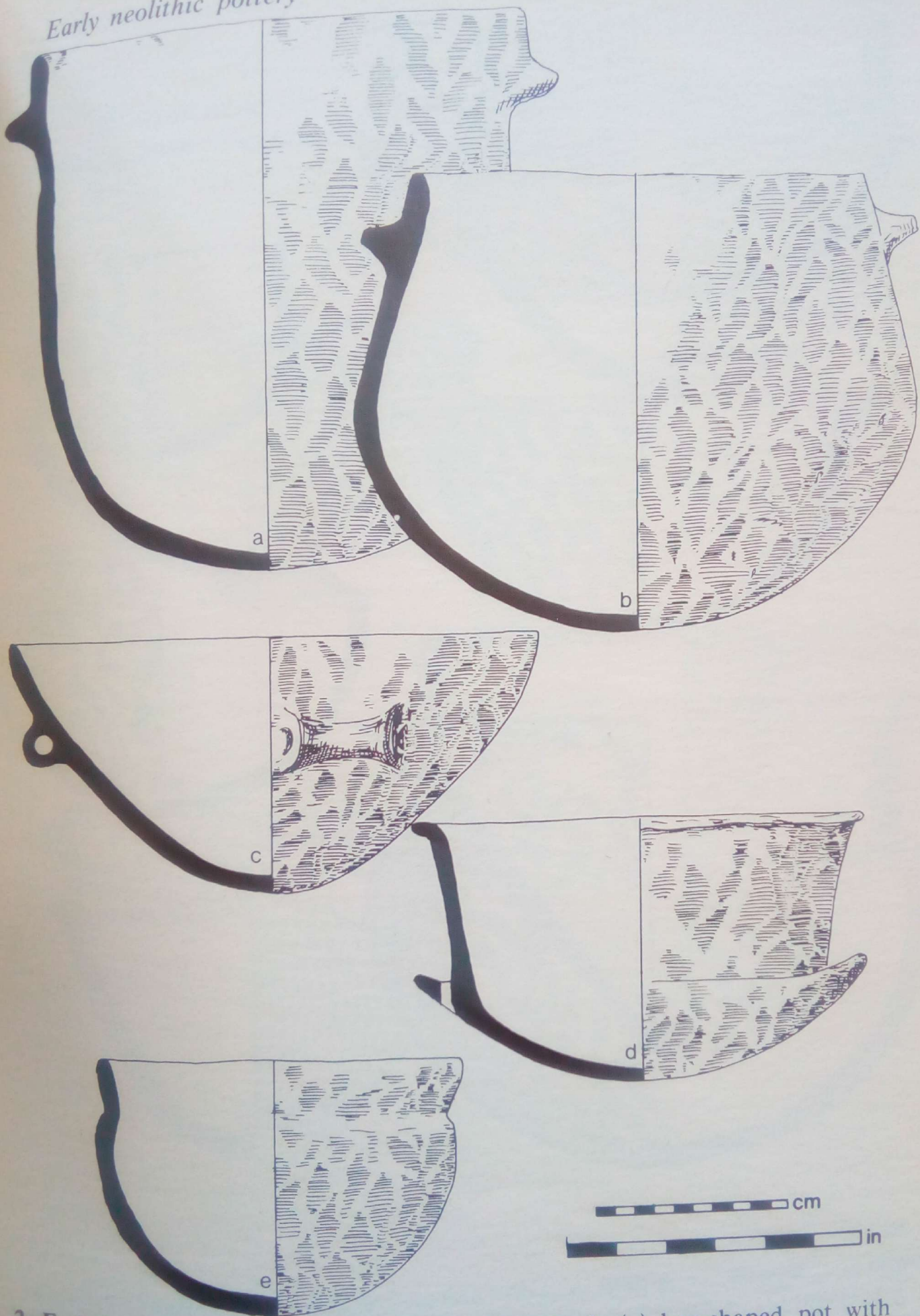


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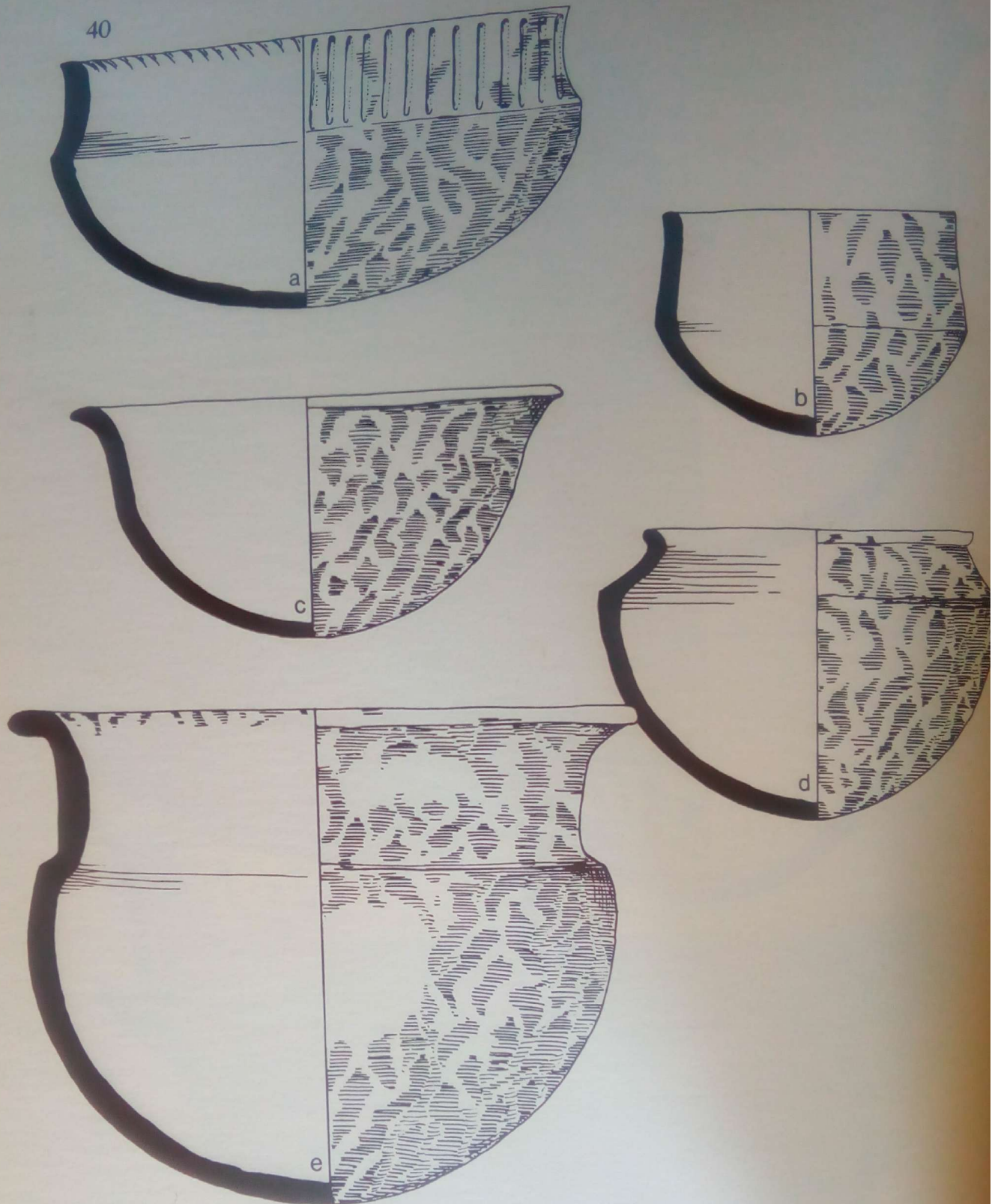
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1. **Early neolithic pottery:** (a) bag-shaped pot with lugs; (b) open bowl with perforated trumpet lug; both from an early neolithic causewayed camp at Hembury, Devon (heights 6.8 in and 4.8 in).

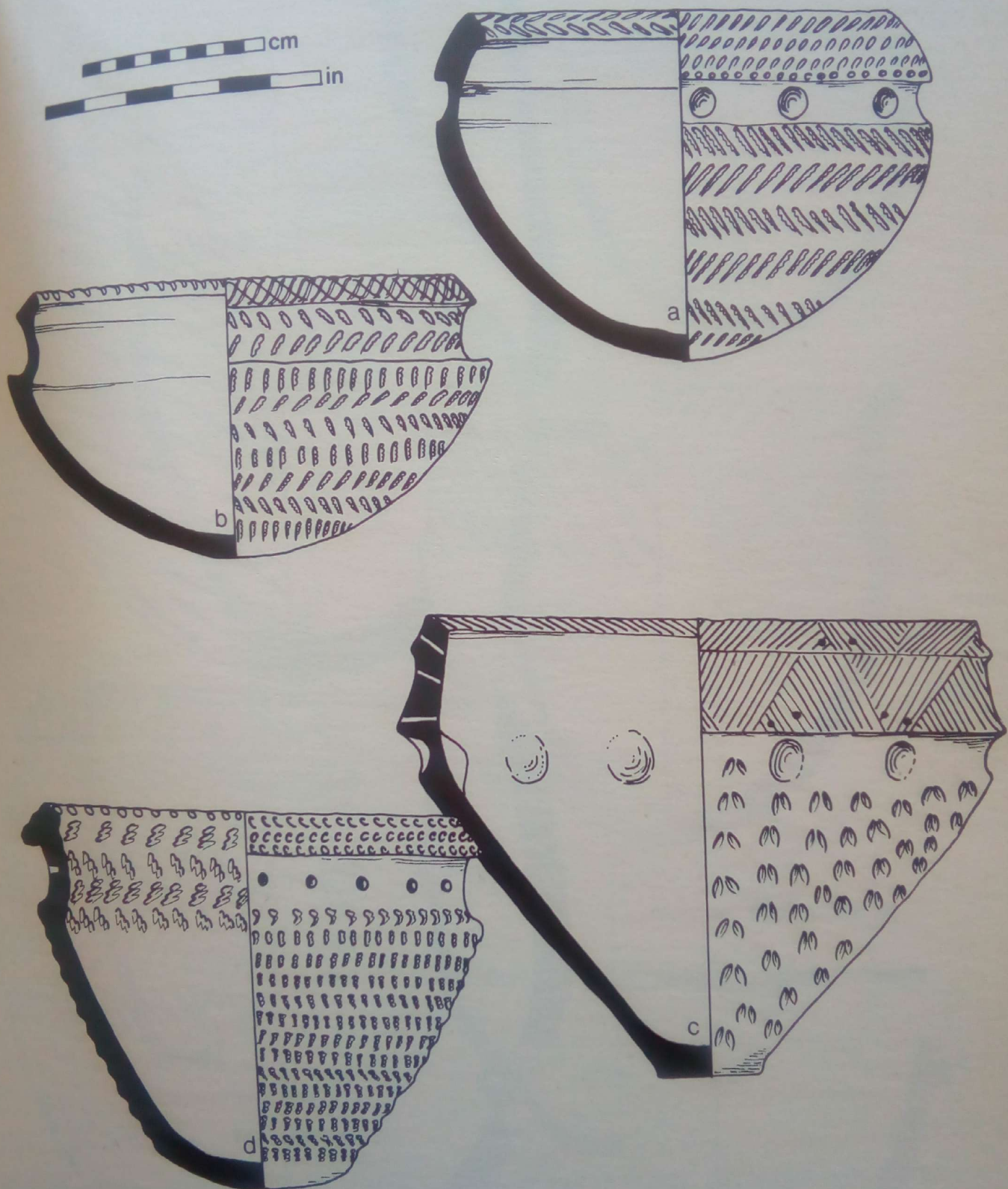


2. Early neolithic pottery from south-west England: (a) bag-shaped pot with horizontal lugs; (b) narrow-mouthed bowl with lugs; (c) bowl with perforated trumpet lug; (d) carinated bowl with perforated lug on carination; (e) simple necked bowl; all from Hembury, Devon.

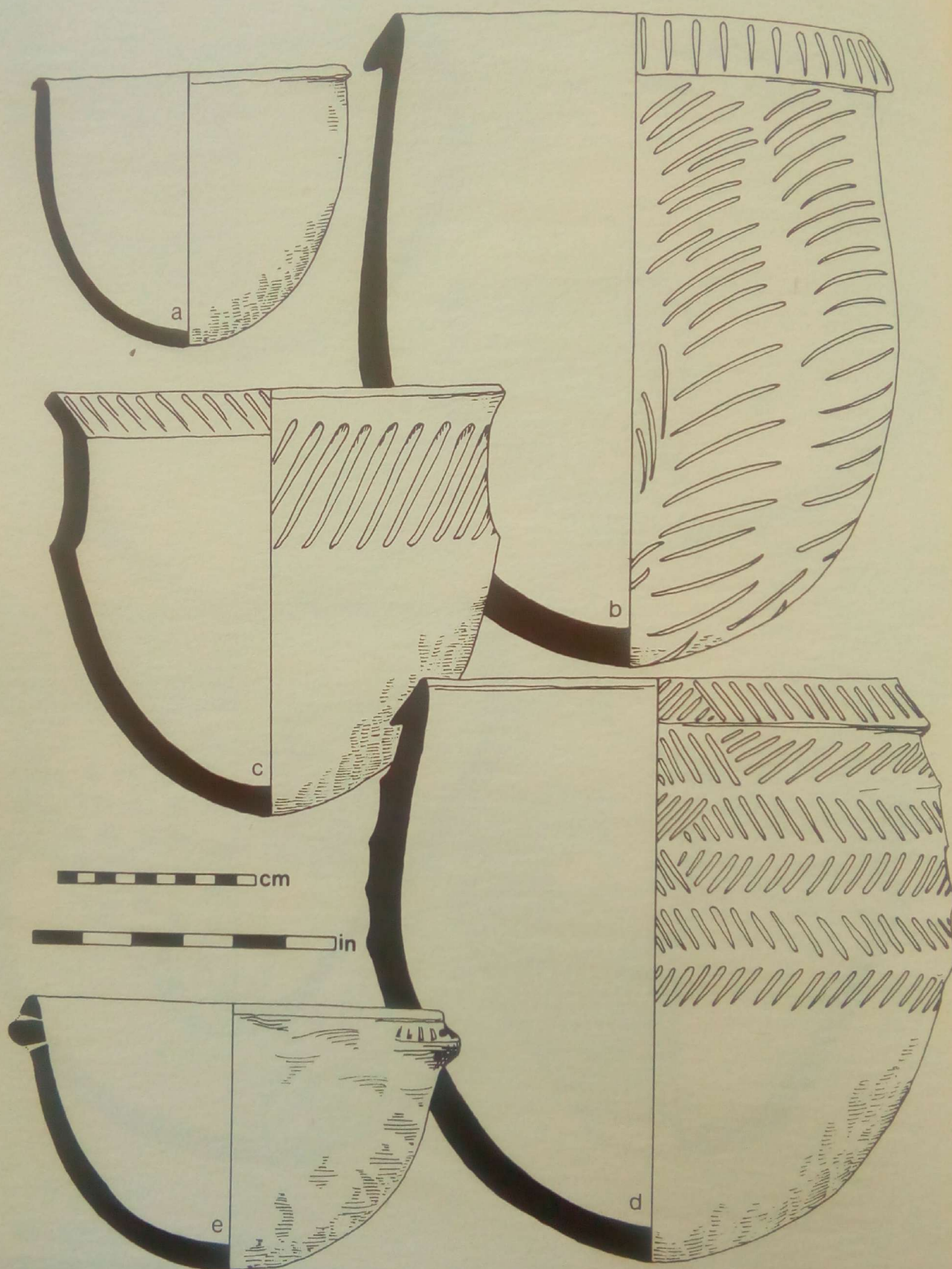
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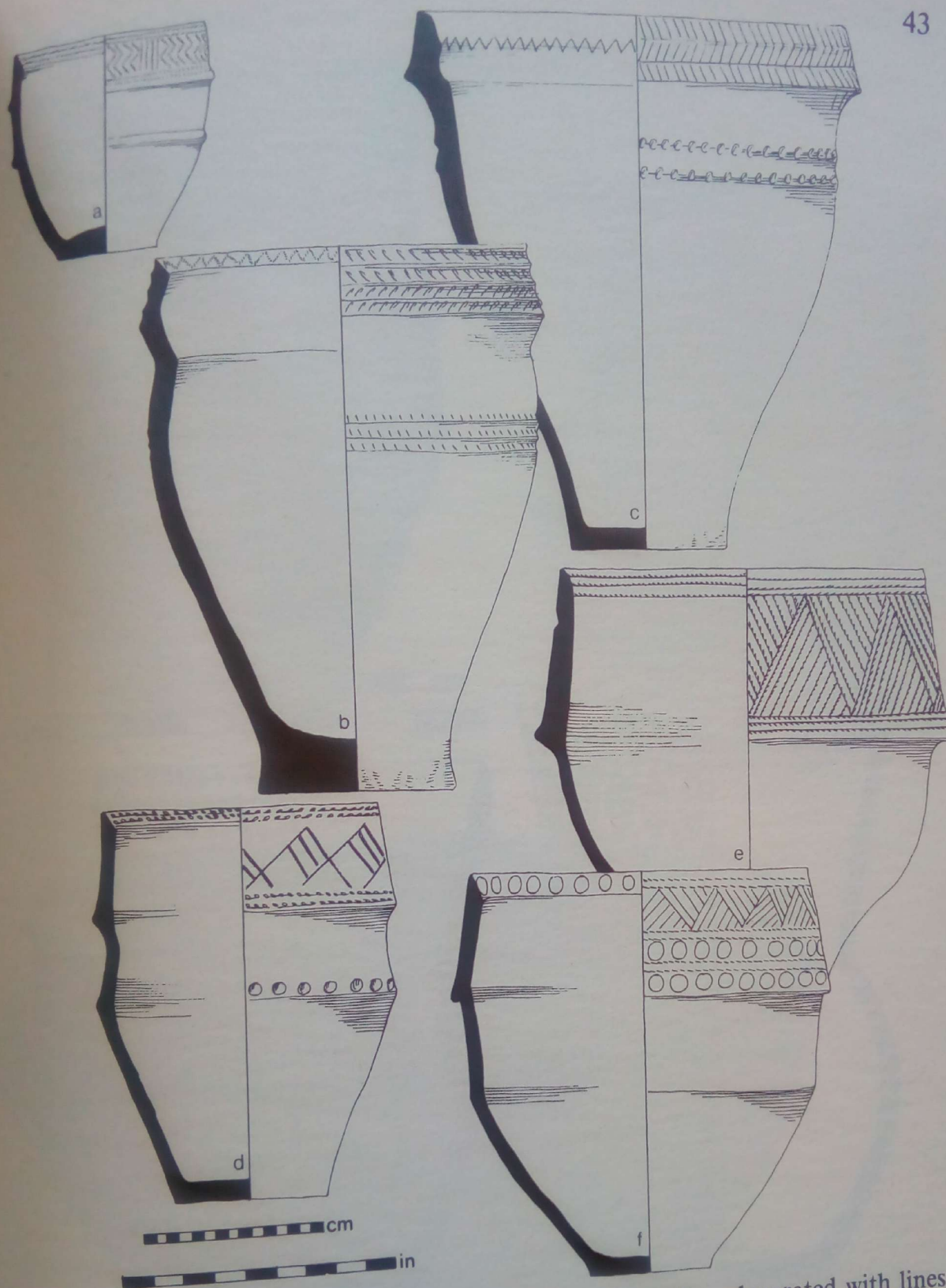
3. Neolithic pottery from southern England: (a) carinated bowl from the causewayed camp at Windmill Hill, Wilts; (b) plain bowl from Windmill Hill; (c) open bowl from a long barrow at West Kennet, Wilts; (d) and (e) bowls from Broome Heath, Ditchingham, Norfolk.

Peterborough pottery

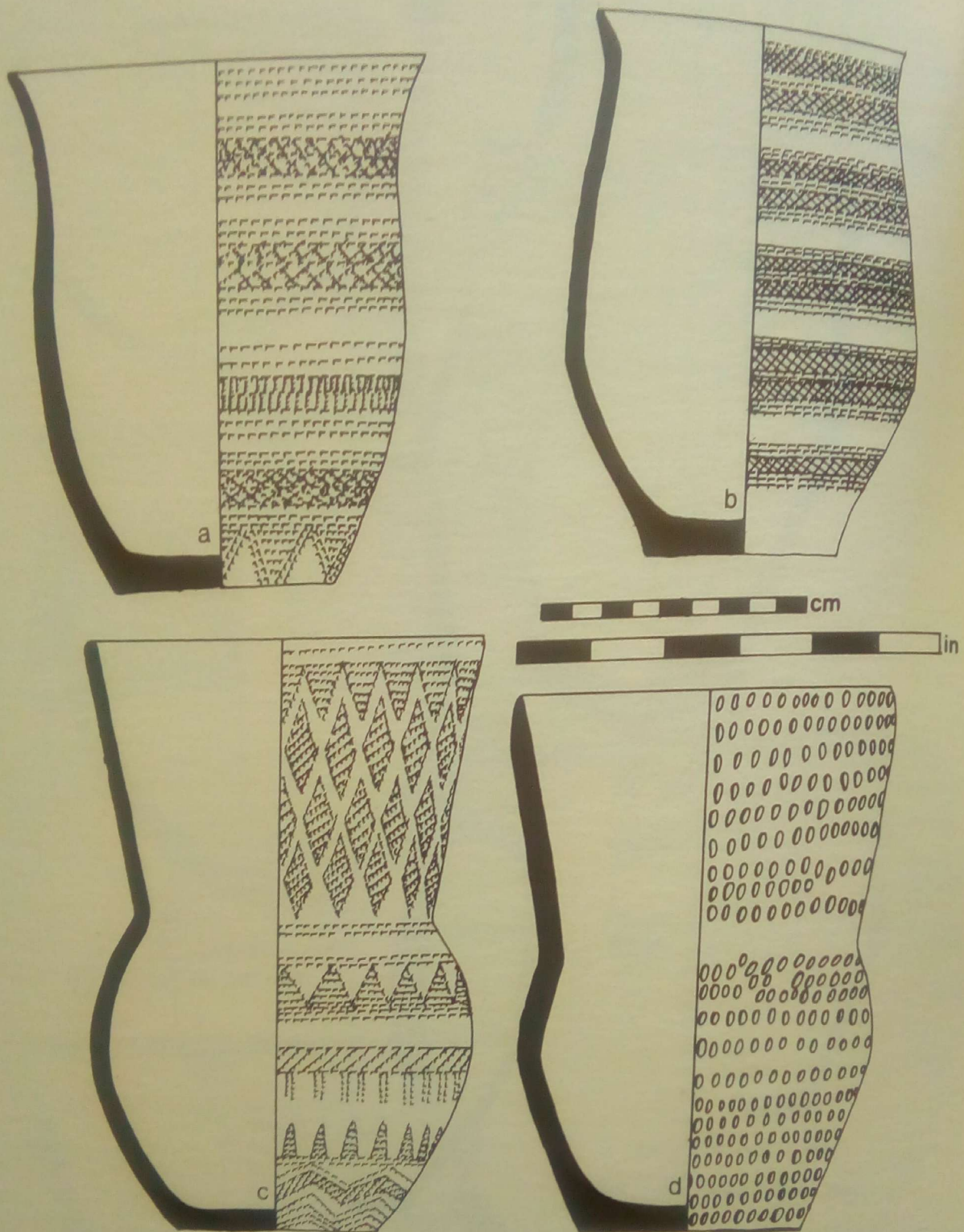
4. Peterborough pottery: (a) Ebbsfleet bowl from the causewayed camp at Windmill Hill, Wilts; (b) Peterborough bowl from Windmill Hill; (c) Fengate bowl with collar, from the West Kennet long barrow, Wilts; (d) Fengate bowl from Windmill Hill.



5. Late neolithic pottery from Scotland: (a) simple bowl; (b) collared pot with slashed decoration; (c) carinated bowl with slashing inside the rim and grooves on neck; (d) collared pot with ridges and slashed decoration; (e) simple bowl with perforated lugs; all from Eilean an Tighe, North Uist.



6. Collared urns: (a) urn with cordons on neck and shoulder, decorated with lines of cord impressions on the bevel and lines and zigzags on the collar, from a barrow at Rhoscrowther, Dyfed; (b) urn with whipped cord zigzag decoration on the rim, bevel and shoulder, from a barrow at Winterbourne Stoke, Wilts; (c) urn with incised zigzag decoration on the rim bevel and multiple zigzags on the collar, with fingertip marks on the shoulder, from a barrow at Pamphill, Dorset; (d) urn with cord ornament on the rim bevel and collar and fingertip marks on the shoulder, from a cremation cemetery at Pokesdown, Dorset; (e) urn with cord-impressed lines on rim bevel and hatched triangles on the collar, from a barrow at Warminster, Wilts; (f) urn with circular impressions on the rim bevel and collar and incised hatched triangles, from a cist burial at Llangynidr, Powys.



7. **Beakers:** (a) bell beaker with comb-stamp impressed patterns, from a barrow at Roundway, Wilts; (b) bell beaker decorated with comb-stamp impressed patterns and incised lines, from a barrow at Upton Lovell, Wilts; (c) long-necked beaker with comb-stamp geometric patterns, from a barrow at Winterbourne Monkton, Wilts; (d) long-necked beaker with oval impressions, from a barrow at Wilsford, Wilts.



a

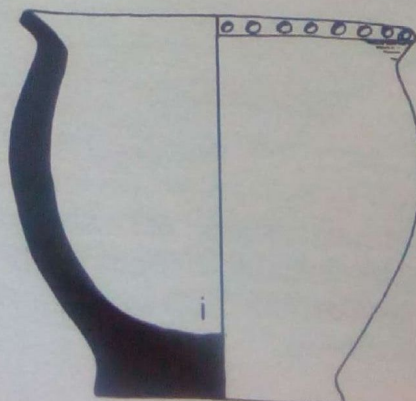
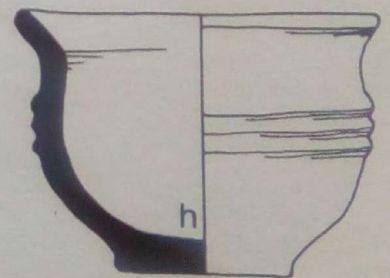
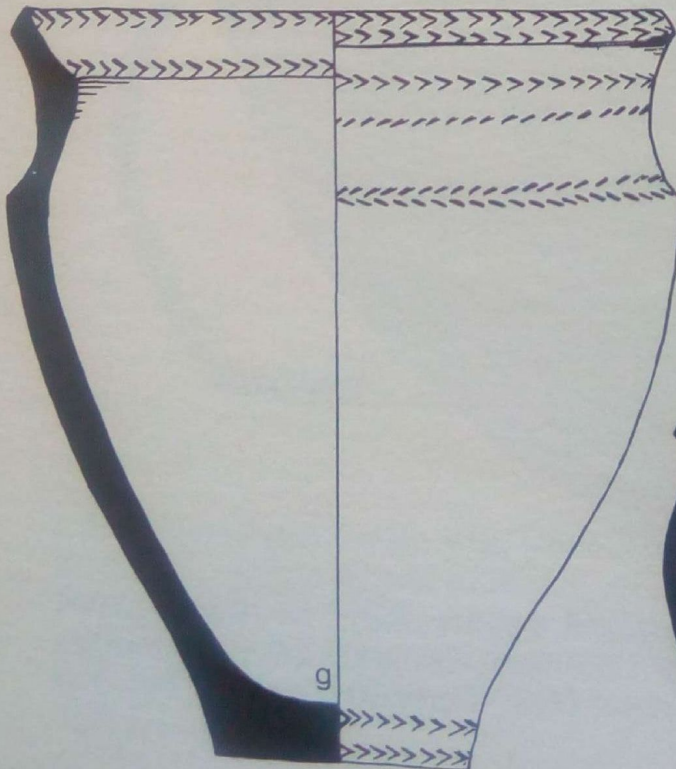
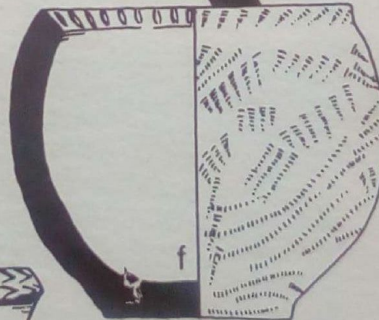
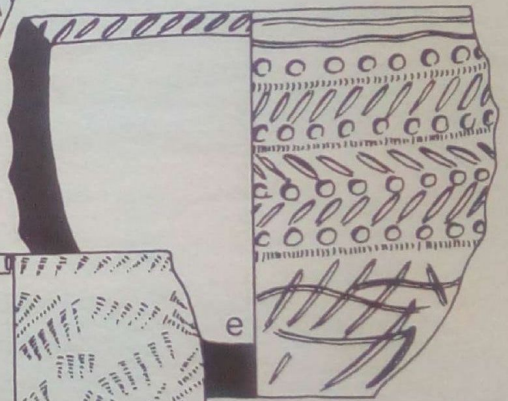
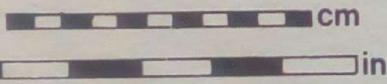
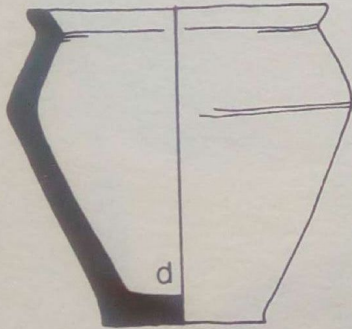
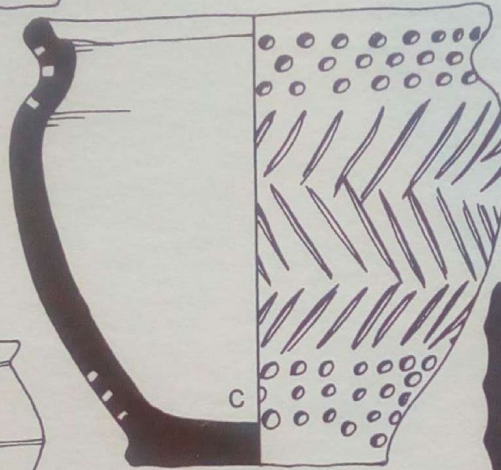
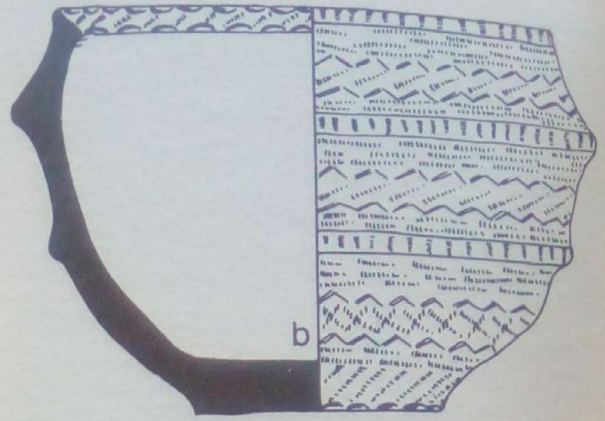
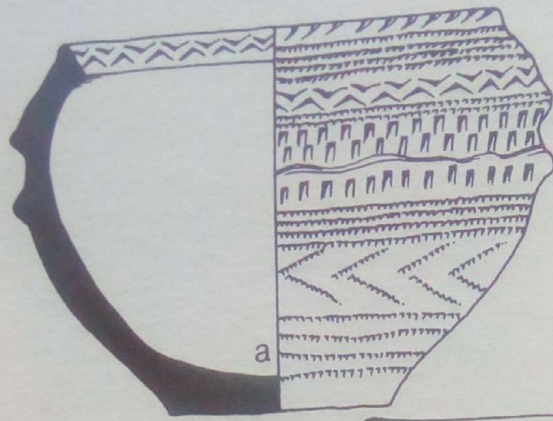


b



c

8. Beakers and food vessel: (a) short-necked beaker from Newlands, Oyne, Aberdeen; (b) short-necked beaker from Crawford, Lanarkshire; (c) Yorkshire food vessel with perforated lugs in the groove, from 'Yorkshire' (heights 7 in, 5 in and 3½ in respectively).

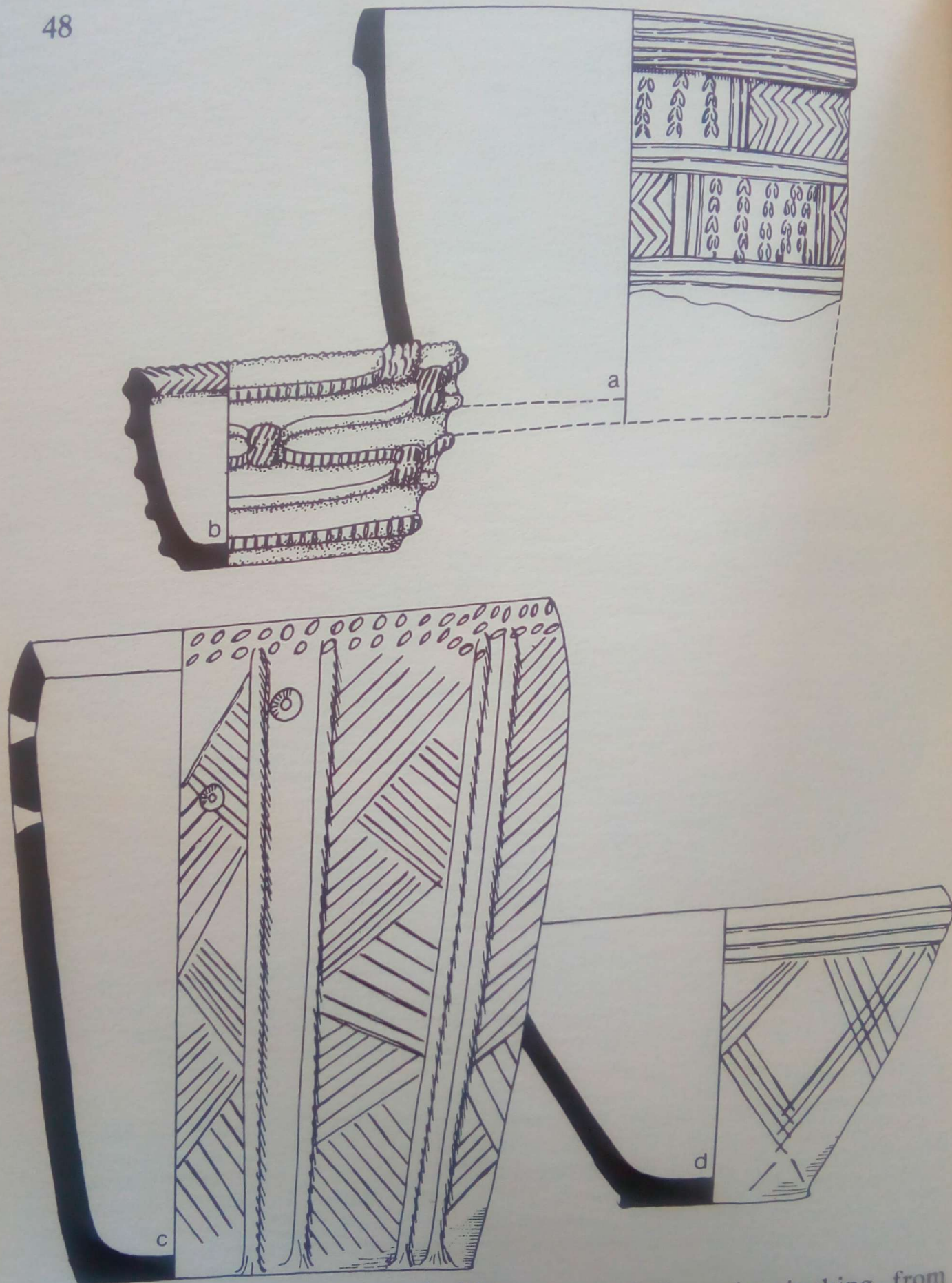


Food vessels

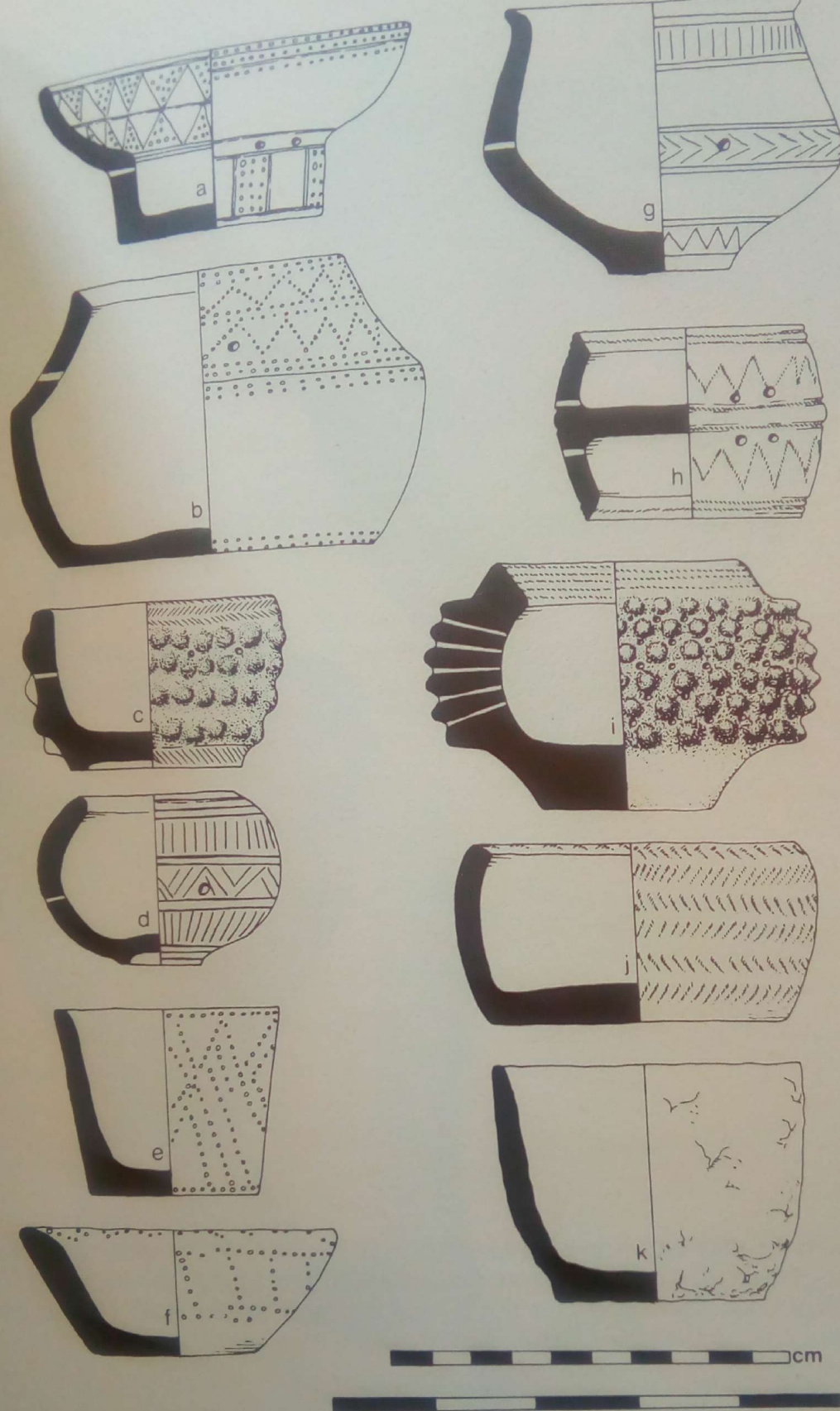
10. Food vessels: (a) food vessel with impressed decoration, from Duncra Hill, East Lothian; (b) food vessel with cord and impressed decoration, from Dunbeath, Fife; (c) food vessel with impressed cord decoration in hatched triangles, from Yetholme, Roxburghshire (heights $5\frac{1}{2}$ in, 5 in and $4\frac{1}{2}$ in respectively).

Opposite page

9. Food vessels: (a) northern food vessel with stabbed decoration on bevel and impressed, stabbed and cord ornament on body, from Finnart Hill, Wigtownshire; (b) northern food vessel decorated on bevel and body with comb-stamps and impressed motifs, from Kilmartin Glebe, Argyll; (c) food vessel with hollow neck and a groove inside the rim, decorated with incised zigzags and stabbed holes, from a burial mound at Whitford, Clwyd; (d) plain food vessel from a barrow at Collingbourne Kingston, Wilts; (e) ridged food vessel with oblique grooves on the bevel and incised and impressed decoration on the body, found with (f), a simple food vessel with 'maggot' decoration, from a barrow at Templeton, Dyfed; (g) enlarged food vessel with incised decoration on the bevel, rim and body, from a barrow at Winterbourne Stoke, Wilts; (h) plain ridged food vessel from Wiltshire; (i) food vessel with circular impressions on the rim, from a barrow at Figcheldean, Wilts.



11. Grooved ware: (a) pot decorated with grooves and fingertip pinching, from Woodhenge, Wilts (height 11.5 in); (b) pot decorated with slashed cordons, from Woodlands, near Woodhenge, Wilts (height 2¼ in); (c) tall perforated pot decorated with fingertip impressions, vertical cordons and grooved hatching, from Wilsford, Wilts (height 9 in); (d) bowl with grooved decoration, from West Runton, Norfolk (height 5.3 in).



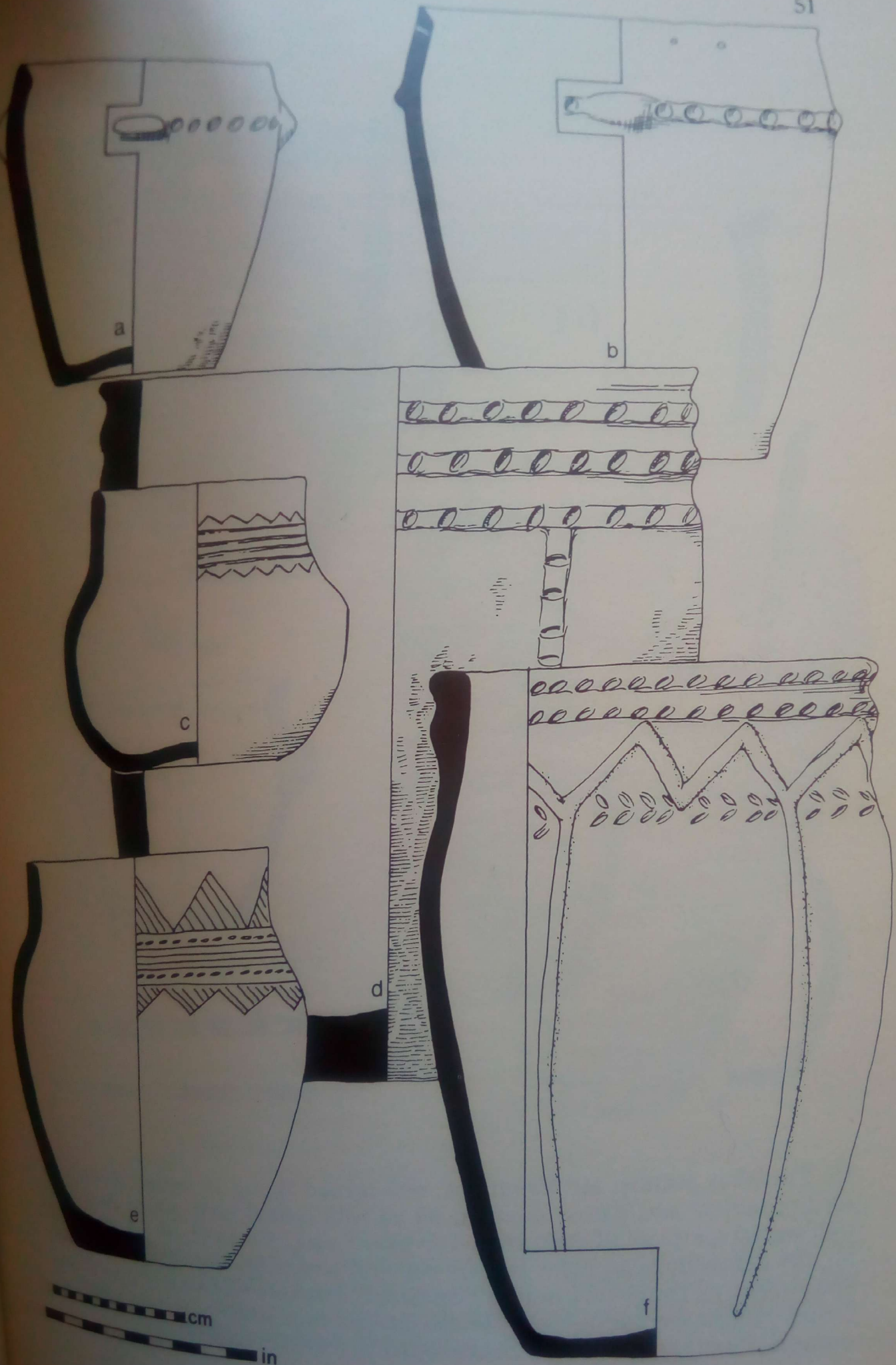
12. Incense cups: (a) Aldbourne cup with grooving and circular impressions inside and outside, from Wimborne St Giles, Dorset; (b) cup with dotted pattern on body and base, from Wilsford, Wilts; (c) grape cup with applied knobs and incision, from Amesbury, Wilts; (d) perforated cup with incised decoration, from Talbenny, Dyfed; (e) miniature pot with dotted patterns from Winterbourne Stoke, Wilts; (f) similar to (e) from the Winterbourne Stoke cemetery; (g) cup with incised decoration from 'Wiltshire'; (h) double incense cup with incised decoration, from Winterbourne Stoke; (i) grape cup with knobs and cord ornament from Wilsford, Wilts; (j) miniature pot with whipped cord impressions, from Amesbury, Wilts; (k) plain miniature pot from Winterbourne Stoke, Wilts.

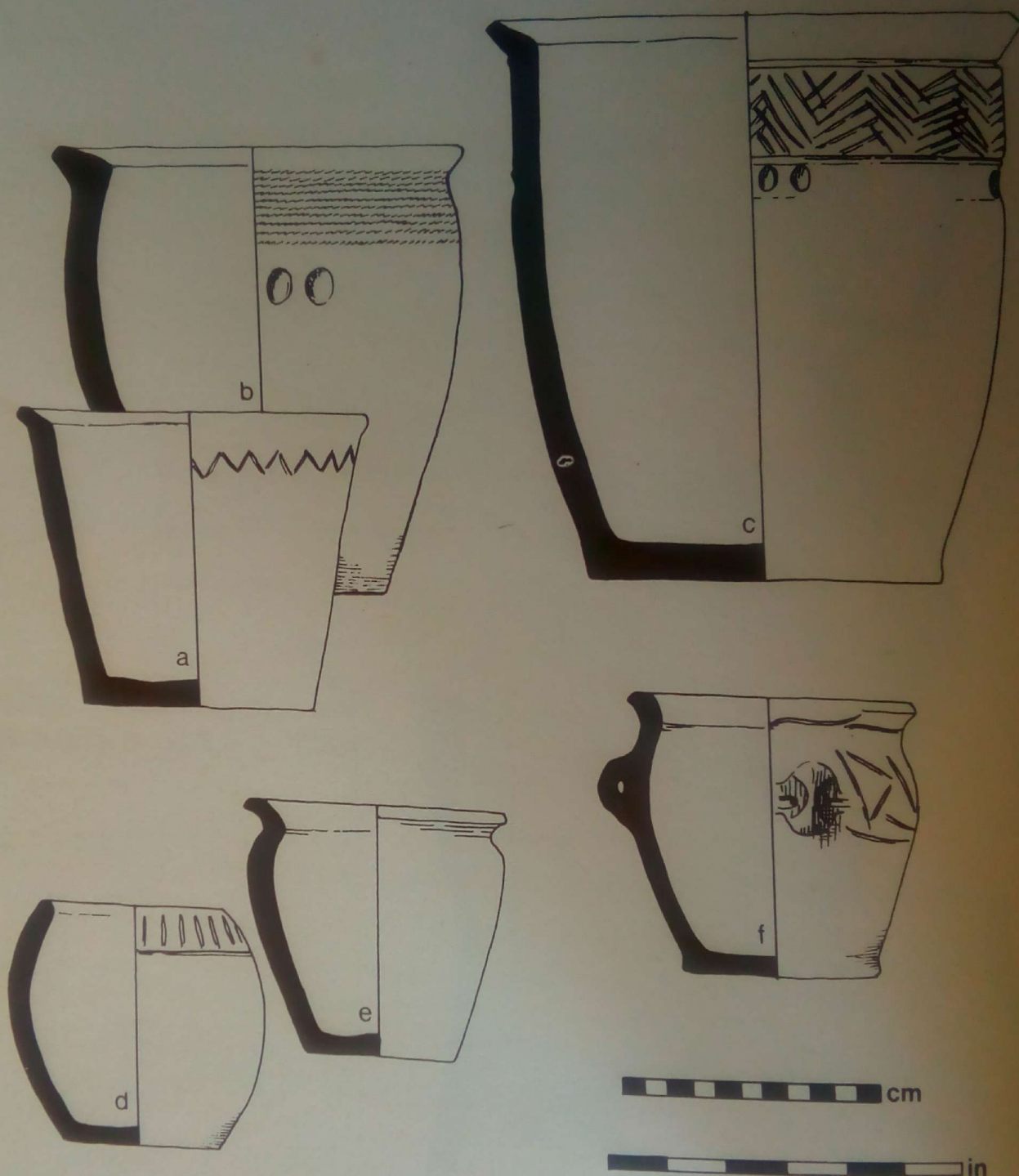


13. Early bronze-age urns: (a) Cornish handled urn with cord ornament on the bevel and body, from Rosecliston, Cornwall (height 15 in); (b) enlarged food vessel with impressed decoration on the bevel, rim and upper part of the body, from Ruabon, Clwyd (height 12 in).

Opposite page

14. Deverel-Rimbury pottery: (a) bucket urn with horizontal lugs and fingertip impressions around the shoulder, from a barrow at Stourfield, Hants; (b) bucket urn with applied fingertipped cordon, from a barrow at Collingbourne Ducis, Wilts; (c) globular urn with incised decoration on neck, from the Pokesdown cremation cemetery, Dorset; (d) barrel urn with applied fingertipped cordons, from a barrow near Amesbury, Wilts; (e) globular urn with grooved geometric decoration, found near Salisbury, Wilts; (f) barrel urn decorated with cordons and finger printing, from the Pokesdown cremation cemetery, Dorset.





15. Trevisker pottery: (a) 'flower-pot' with incised zigzag decoration; (b) jar with cord ornament and paired dimples; (c) jar with incised herring-bone decoration and paired dimples; all three from Trevisker Round, Cornwall; (d) round pot with incised decoration; (e) plain pot; (f) pot with perforated lug handle and incised decoration; all three from Norton Fitzwarren, Somerset. (Trevisker pottery is often found with fragments of large Cornish handled urns, usually decorated with cord ornament; only fragments have been found in Trevisker settlements.)

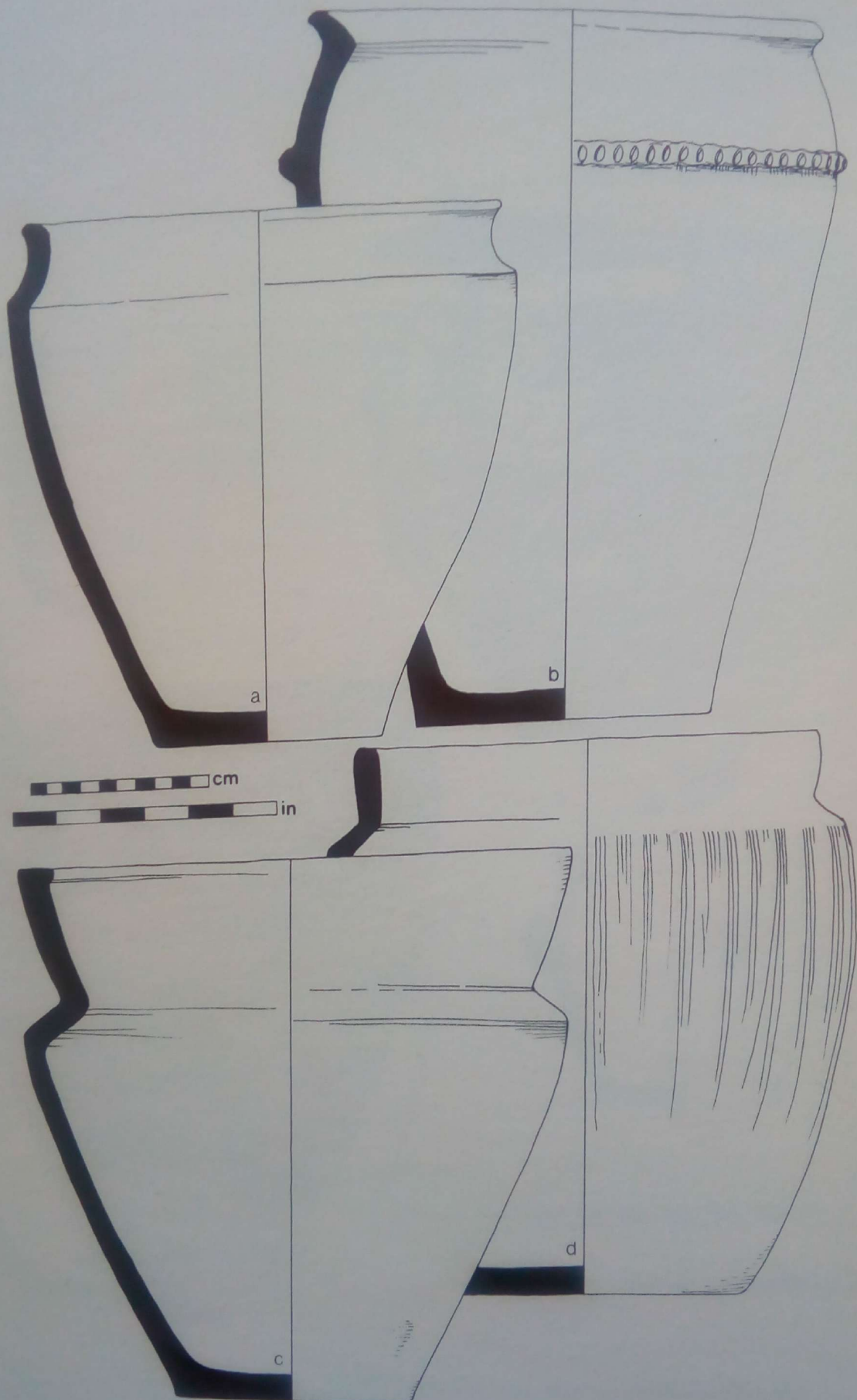


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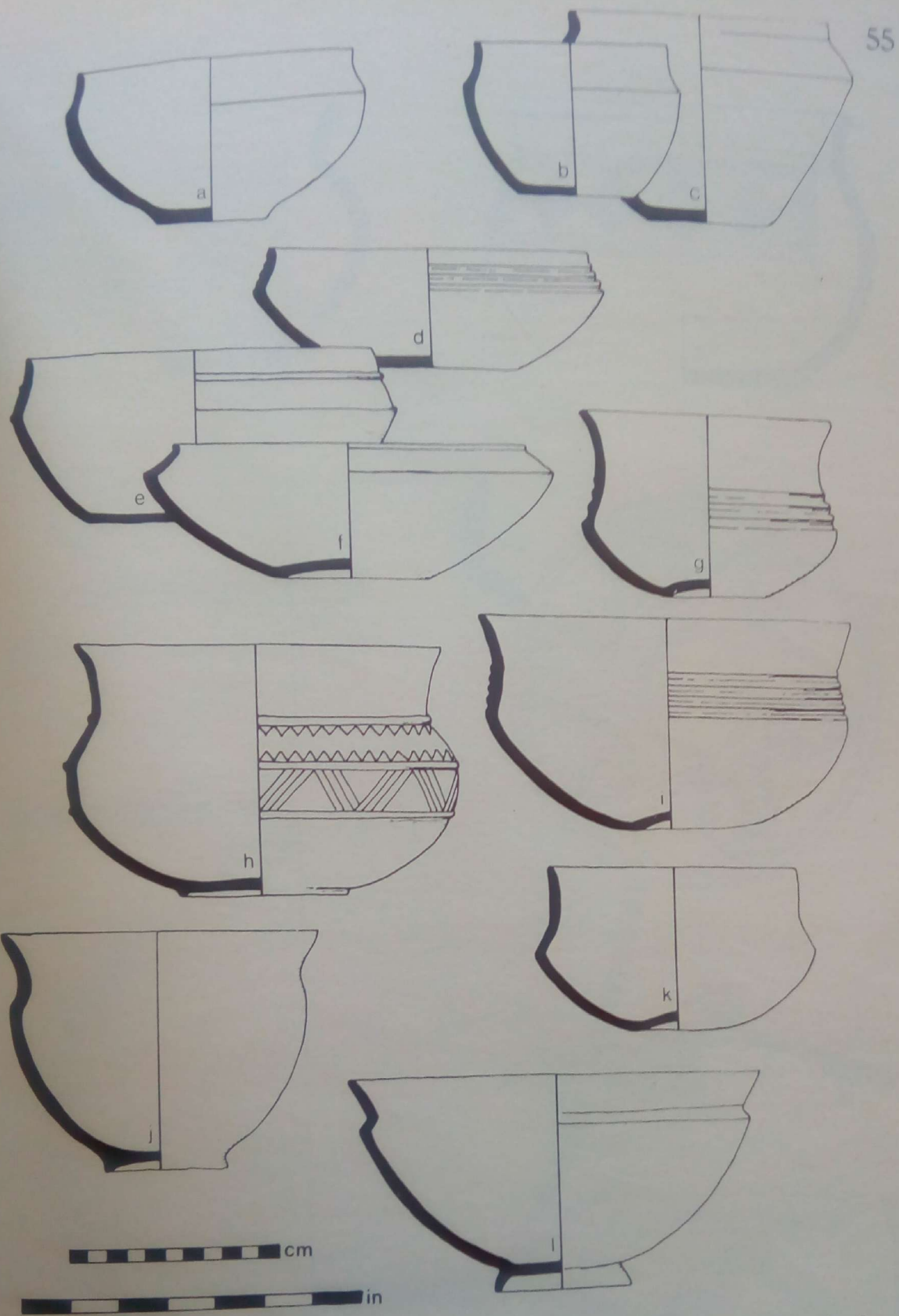


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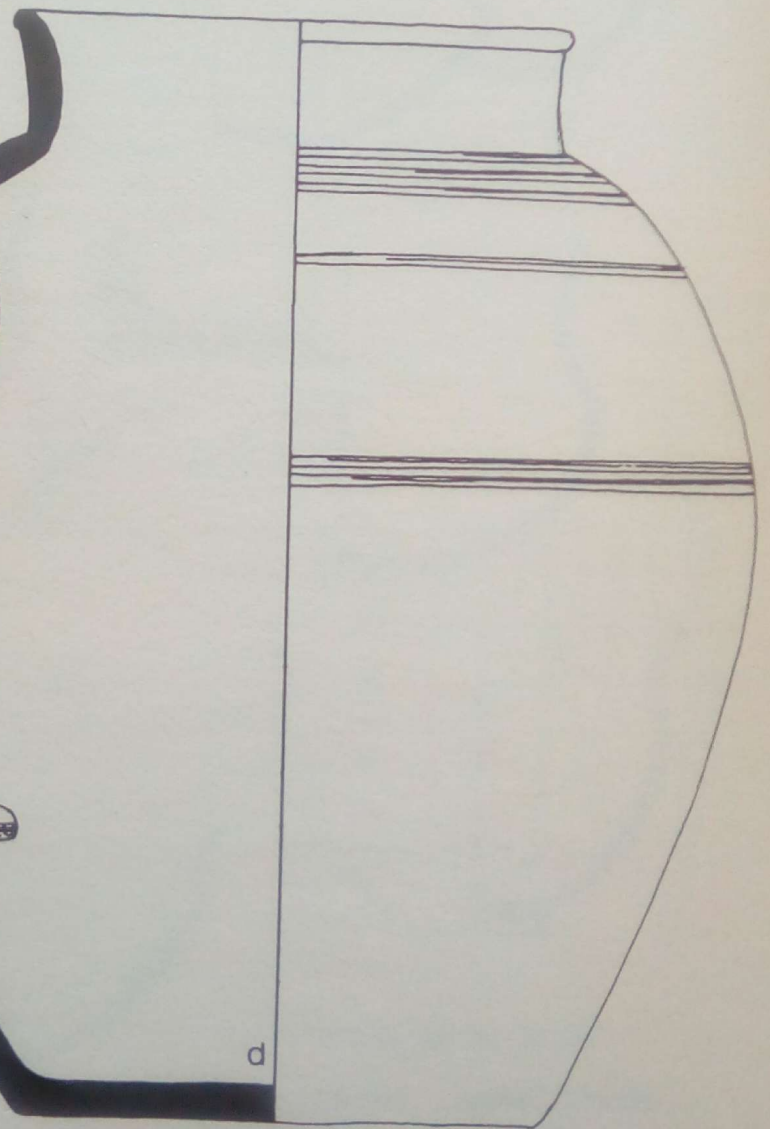
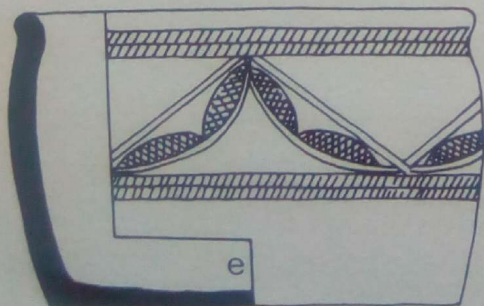
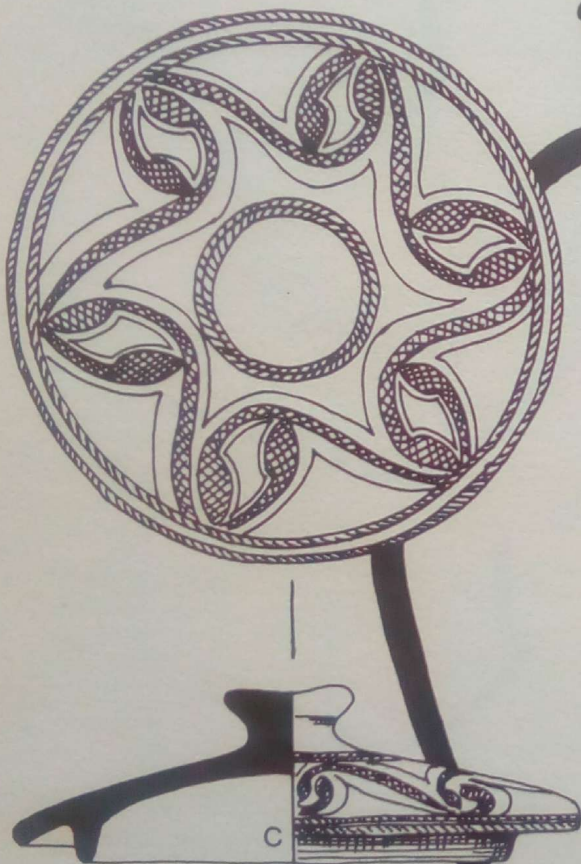
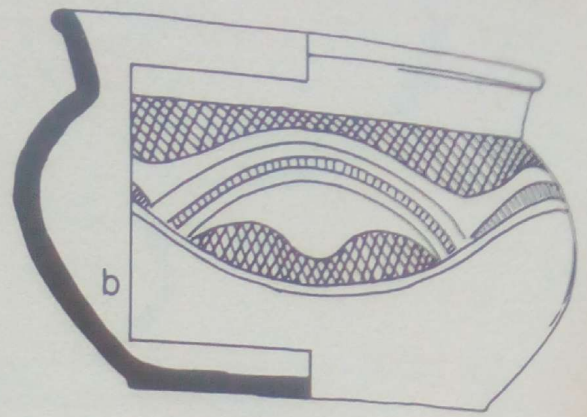
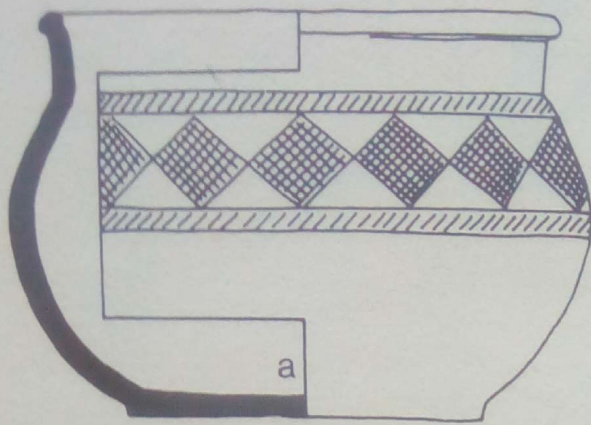
16. Encrusted urns: (a) encrusted urn decorated with cord ornament and applied knobs and strips, with slashing and impressions, from Penllwyn, Melindwr, Dyfed (height 13½ in); (b) encrusted urn decorated with impressed cord ornament and applied cordons, from Glenballoch, New Rattray, Perthshire (height 15 in).



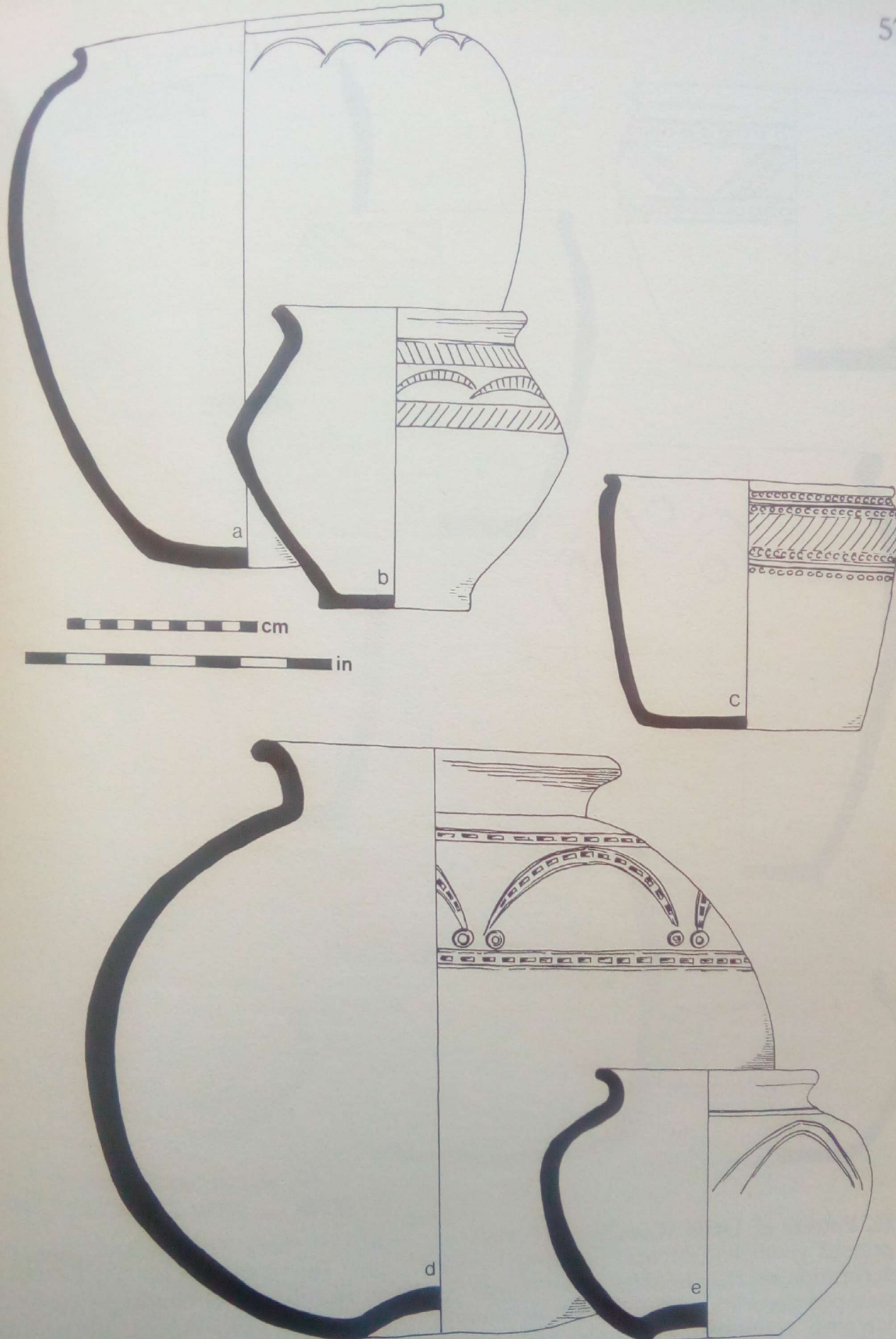
17. Situlate jars of Little Woodbury I types: (a) final bronze-age pot with finger-printed cordon on shoulder, from a settlement at Eldon's Seat, Dorset; (b) situlate jar with upright neck, from Sandy, Beds; (c) acutely angular situlate jar from a settlement at Park Brow, Sussex; (d) jar with upright neck and vertical scratching on the body, from the hillfort at Maiden Castle, Dorset.



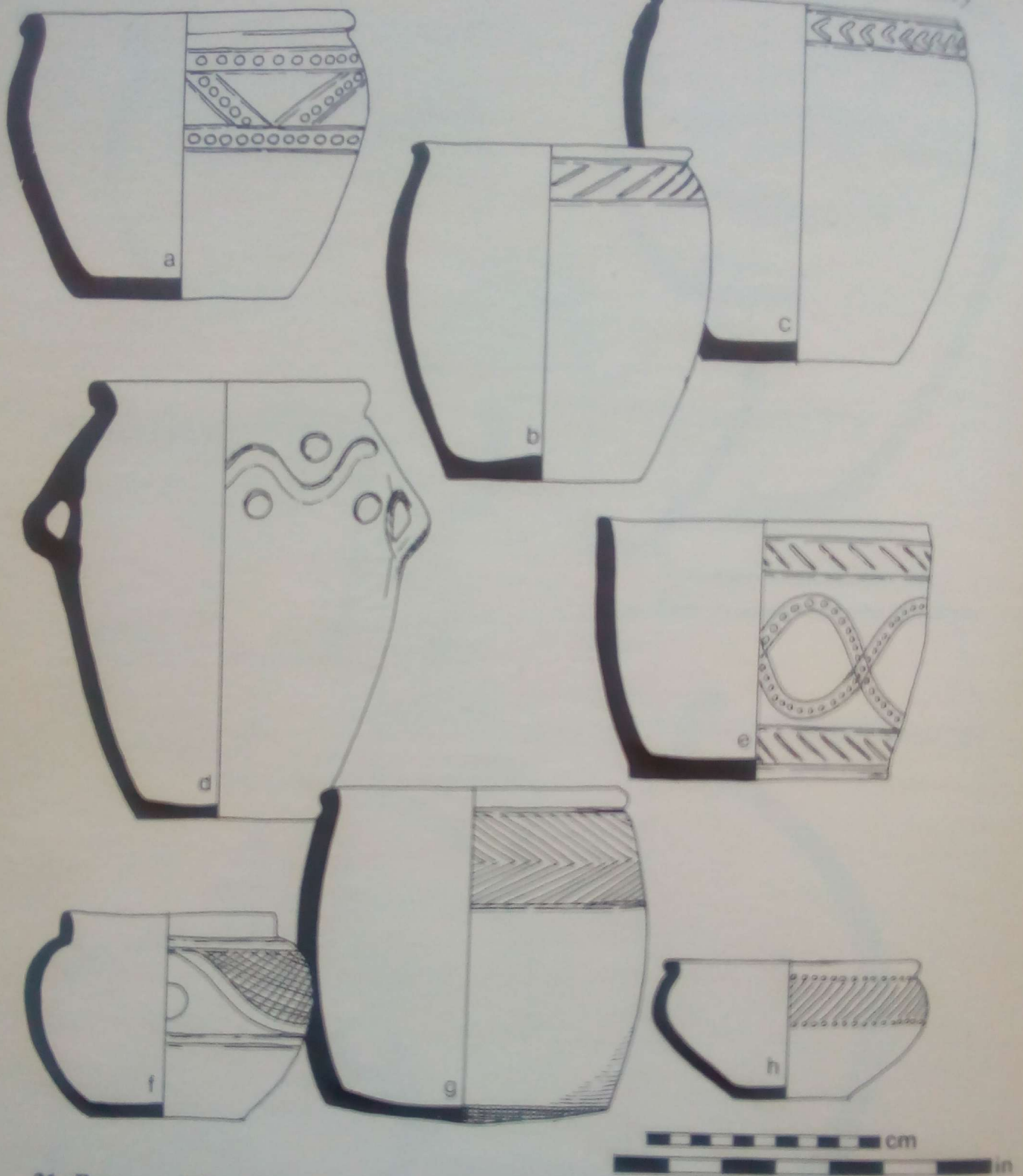
18. Angular bowls of Little Woodbury I types: (a), (b) and (c) plain bowls from Norton Fitzwarren, Somerset; (d) bowl with grooves above the shoulder, from Cold Kitchen Hill, Wilts; (e) bowl with cordons, and (f) carinated bowl with omphalos base, both from West Harling, Norfolk; (g) bowl with grooved decoration, a low carination and an omphalos base; (h) bowl with angles marked by cordons and geometric incised decoration and a ring-foot; (i) grooved bowl with omphalos base; (g), (h) and (i) all from All Cannings Cross, Wilts; (j) bowl with S-curved profile and ring-foot, from Chertsey, Surrey; (k) bowl with upright neck, low carination and omphalos base; (l) open bowl with angular neck and shoulder and low pedestal base; (k) and (l) both from Wandlebury, Cambs.



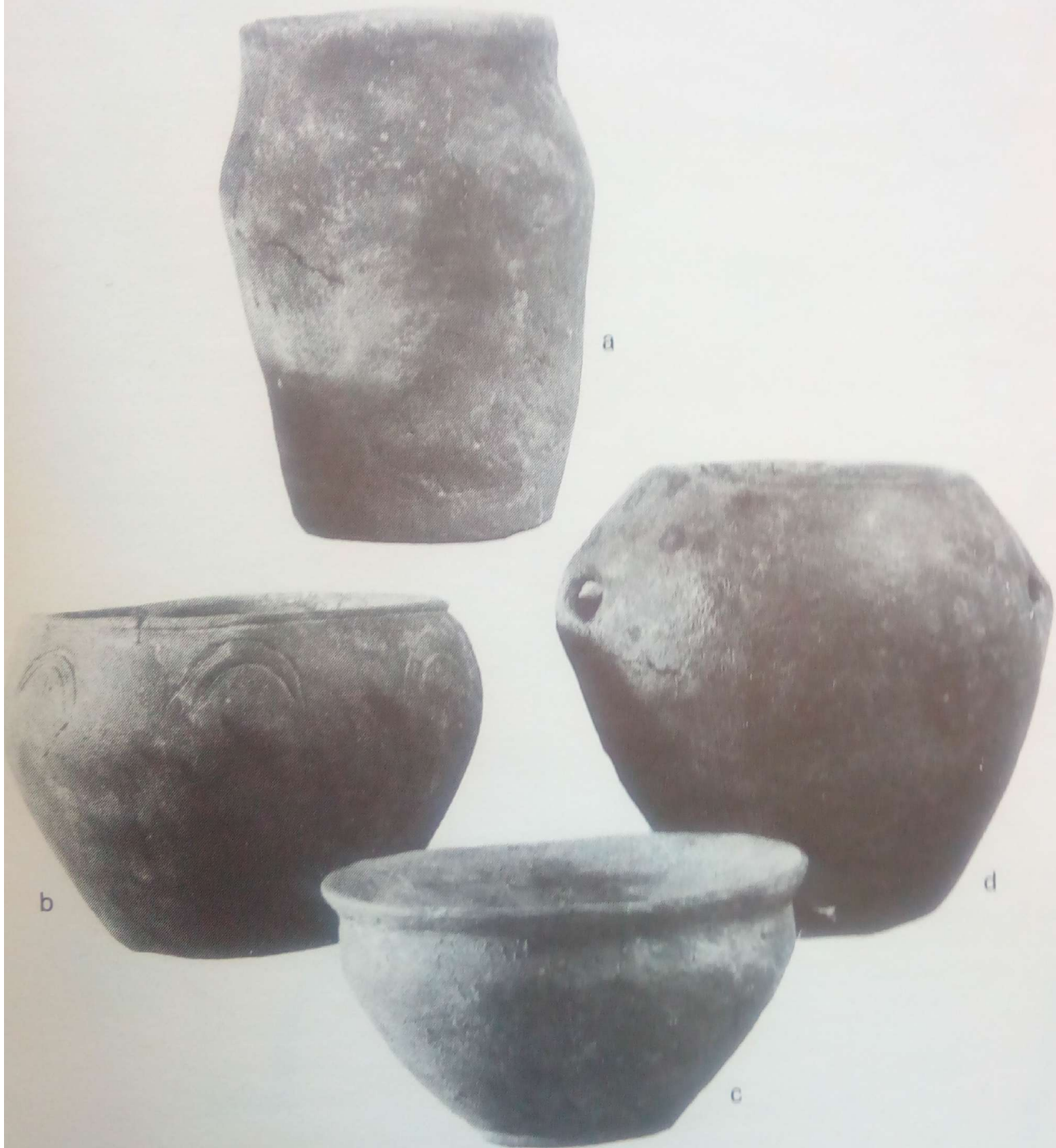
19. Glastonbury pottery: (a) necked bowl with geometric decoration; (b) necked bowl with curvilinear decoration; (c) pot lid (two views) with curvilinear decoration; (d) ovoid storage jar with grooves; (e) tub-shaped pot with curvilinear decoration; all from the lake village at Meare, Somerset.



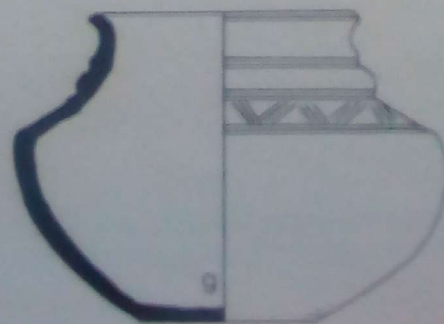
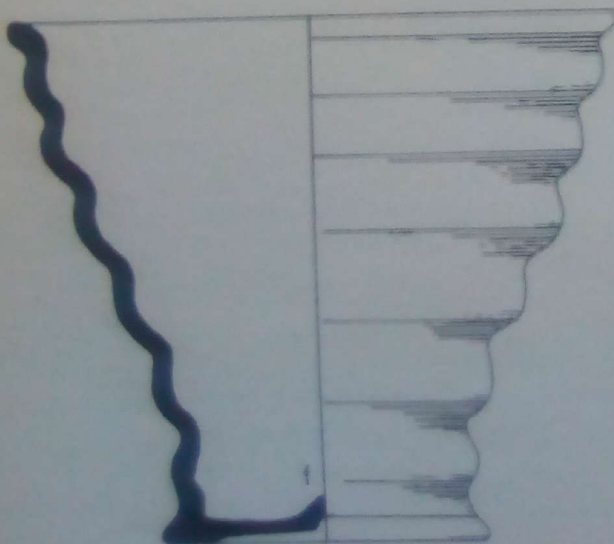
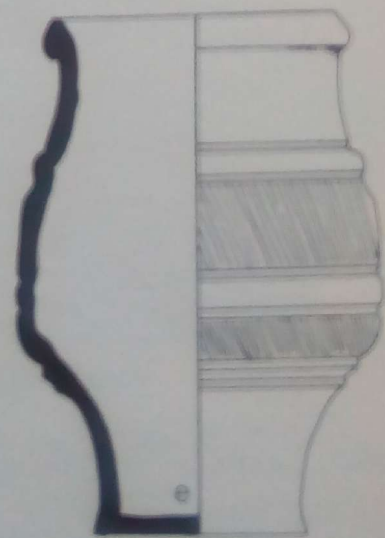
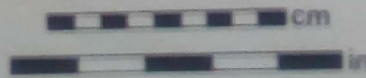
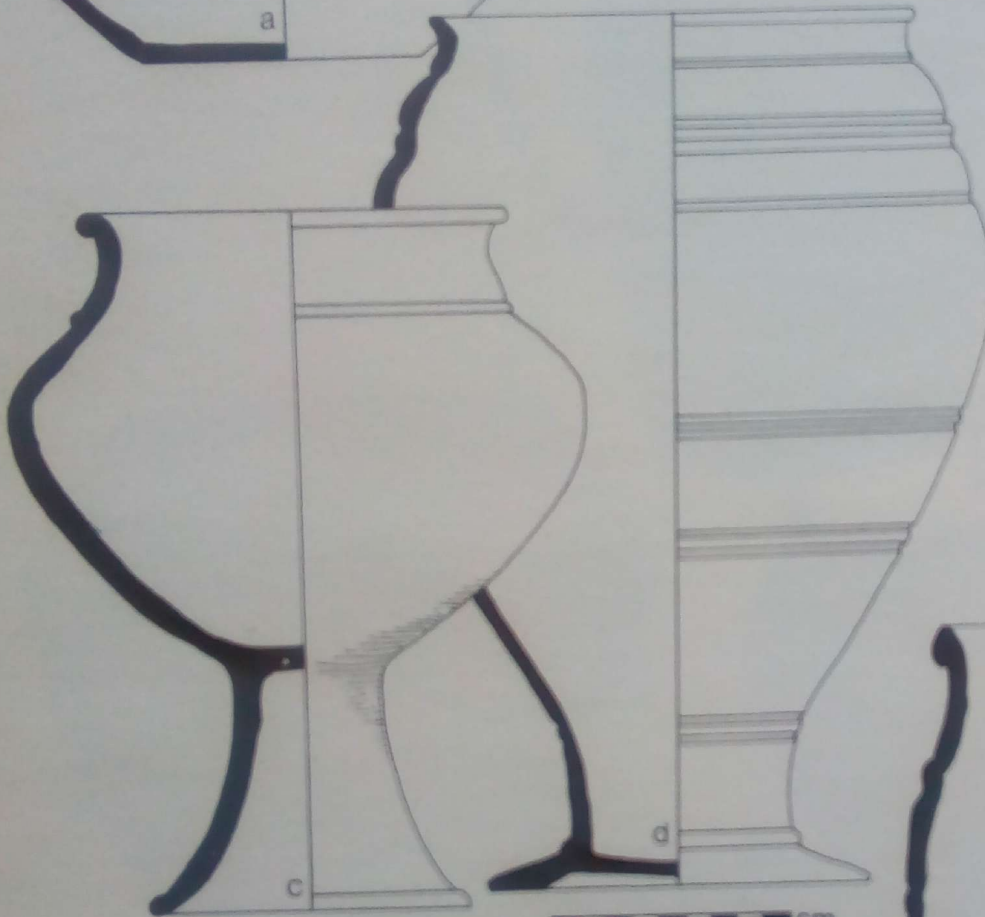
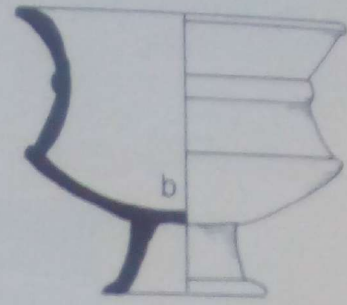
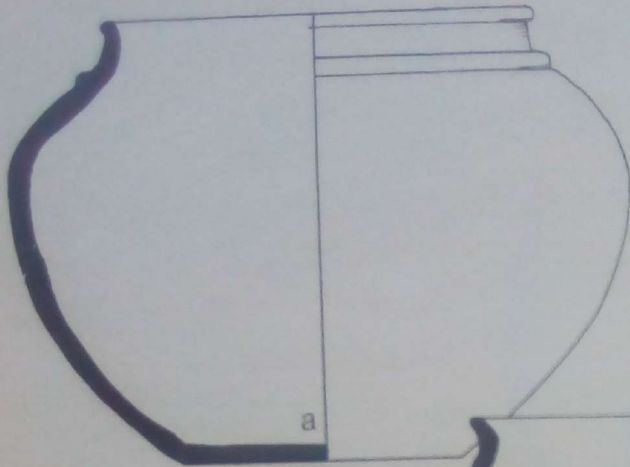
20. Pottery of Little Woodbury II types : (a) storage jar with incised decoration; (b) cooking pot with grooved decoration; (c) tub-shaped pot, or 'saucepan pot', with incised and stamped decoration; all three from Maiden Castle, Dorset; (d) necked jar with incised decoration and omphalos base, from Saltdean, East Sussex; (e) small cooking pot with incised arcs and ring-foot, from Maidstone, Kent.



21. Pottery of Little Woodbury II types: (a) bead-rim bowl with incised and impressed geometric decoration, from Lydney, Glos; (b) bead-rim jar with incised decoration on the shoulder, from Croft Ambrey, Hereford; (c) bead-rim jar with stamped decoration ('duck-stamped ware'), from Bredon Hill, Wores; (d) storage jar with countersunk handle and dimpled decoration, from Maiden Castle, Dorset; (e) 'saucepan pot' with incised geometric and curvilinear decoration and stamped dots, from Blewburton Hill, Oxon; (f) necked bowl with incised curvilinear decoration, from Read's Cavern, Somerset; (g) 'saucepan pot' with incised herring-bone decoration, from St Catherine's Hill, Hants; (h) head-rim bowl with stamped and incised decoration, from Worthy Down, Hants.



22. Pottery from Maiden Castle: (a) plain storage jar; (b) bead-rim bowl with incised decoration; (c) bowl with flaring rim; (d) jar with countersunk handles.

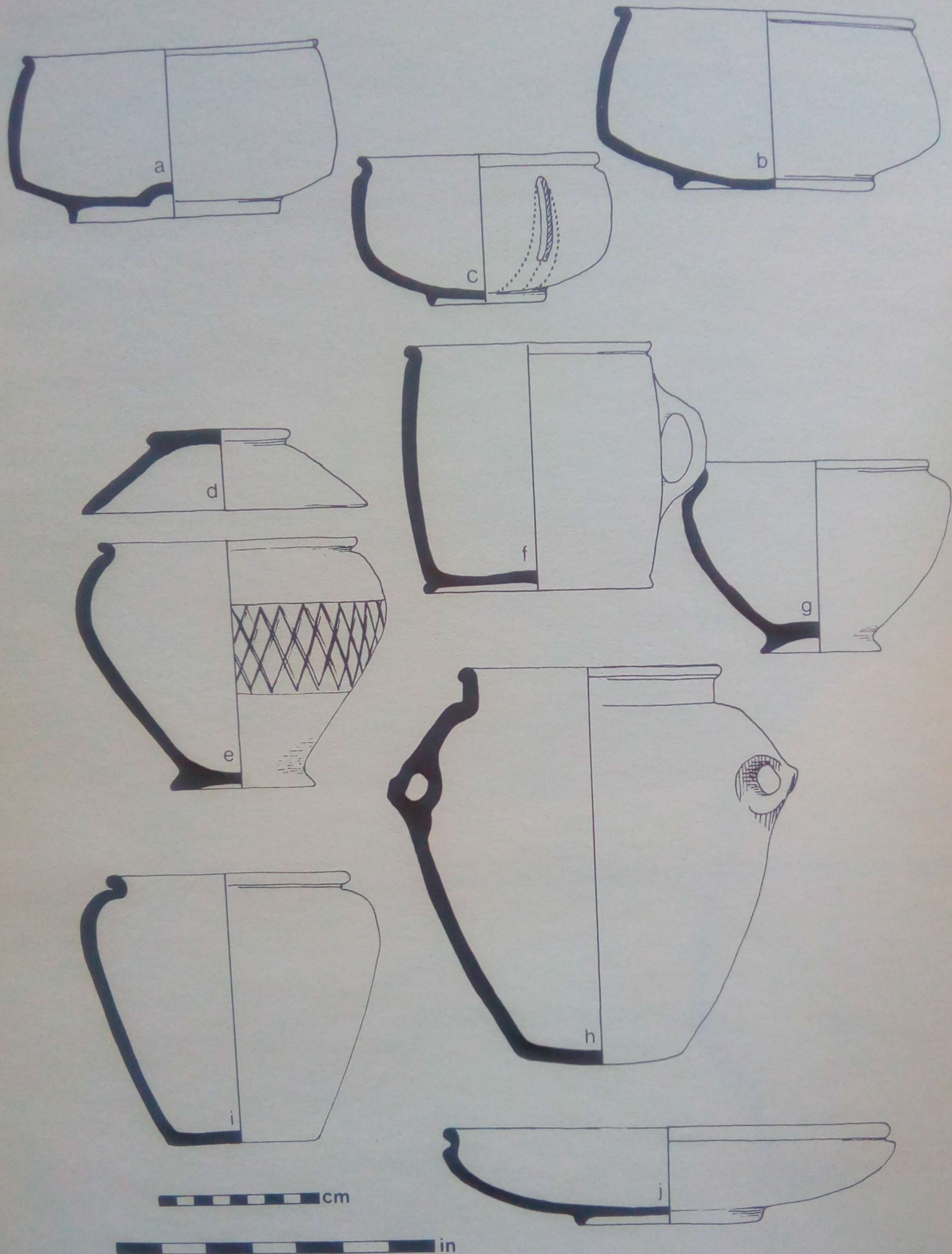




24. 'War cemetery bowl' from Maiden Castle, Dorset (height 4 inches).

Opposite page

23. Pottery of the Aylesford-Swarling culture: (a) S-profiled bowl with cordons; (b) tazza (angular cup on pedestal base); (c) high pedestal jar; (d) pedestal jar with grooved decoration; (e) butt beaker with girth grooves and decorated zones; (f) corrugated vase with omphalos base; (g) necked jar, with grooves and incised decoration; all from the cremation cemeteries at Aylesford and Swarling in Kent.



25. Durotrigian pottery: (a) 'war cemetery bowl' with ring-foot and omphalos base; (b) bowl with ring-foot; (c) bowl with ring-foot and applied strip with dots; (d) conical lid; (e) cooking pot with burnished lattice decoration; (f) handled mug with bead-rim and ring-foot; (g) pedestal bowl; (h) necked jar with countersunk handles; (i) plain high-shouldered jar; (j) flat dish or platter with bead-rim and ring-foot; all from Maiden Castle, Dorset.

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